

THE
SPANISH CAMPAIGN.



A NOVEL.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

THE
SPANISH CAMPAIGN;

OR,
THE JEW.

A Nobel.

—//—
IN THREE VOLUMES.
—//—

BY
MRS. MEEKE,

AUTHOR OF
*CONSCIENCE, MATRIMONY, MIDNIGHT WEDDINGS, NINE DAYS
WONDER, TALE OF MYSTERY, &c. &c.*

Look rapid, how Providence bestows alike
Sunshine and rain to bless the fruitful year,
On different nations, all of different faiths :
And (tho' by several names and titles worshipp'd)
Heaven takes the various tribute of their praise,
Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.

ROWE.

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THE

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CHAP. I.

OUR hero, in conformity to his promise to general Davers, wrote him as follows the morning after his arrival in town :—



“ Finsbury-square, June 7.

“ The date of my letter, my dear sir, will inform you that I am the inmate of one of the worthiest men (if I may judge from the impression he made upon me, and from his general character) in England ; but before I introduce y u to him, I wish to convince you that I have ssrictly adhered

to your advice. My letter from Portsmouth, ~~begin~~ on board the packet, and finished there, will have informed you how I performed my journey from thence to town ; and as we met with neither accident nor delay, we arrived in Gracechurch-street between four and five o'clock yesterday afternoon. I immediately engaged a bedroom, whither I had my baggage conveyed, and there I left Ned and Susan refreshing themselves with some tea, who were to remain upon guard while I sallied forth, wishing to deliver my credentials to Mr. Thornhill senior ere the house shut. Fortunately he was, what he styled, upon duty ; and while he read your letter, his son, who was with him, and I renewed our acquaintance ; but we had not exchanged many inquiries ere his father addressed me in the politest terms, and professed the greatest readiness to serve me, coming at once into my plans, without requiring any farther explanation ; and as time wore, he sent William and several porters back with me to the inn, who removed six of my seven strong boxes into Lombard-street, where they were sealed, and

deposited in their strong room, and I promised to call the next morning to give my final orders respecting them, as I told Mr. Thornhill, who wished me to have accompanied him down to Clapham Common, where I meant to take up my abode. He spoke in the highest terms of Mr. Levi, and assured me that he was the first man in London in the diamond line; but as he did not exactly know when to expect me, and might therefore be from home, William would accompany me into the square; and I saw he waited at the corner of Chiswell-street till I was admitted.

“Not having shewn myself at the War-Office, therefore hardly feeling off duty, and being besides unprovided with any other clothes, I was in a regimental frock, which led the servant who admitted me, even before I had declared my name, to say—‘Captain Franklin, I presume?’ leading the way into a spacious and most elegantly-furnished drawing-room, as Mr. Levi was still in the eating-parlour, and had some friends with him; but ere I had look-

ed round me, this truly amiable man joined me. I should have known him any where, or rather have guessed who he was, he bears so strong a resemblance to my late wife; our emotion was therefore mutual, and proceeded from the same cause, as we each reminded the other of a beloved object, whom we both equally regretted. But not to dwell upon a scene which renewed my unavailing grief, Mr. Levi was the first to recover himself—nay, he even blamed himself for mourning, when he ought to rejoice in the certainty of his granddaughter's beatitude; and proceeded to welcome me in the most cordial and most affectionate terms to his house; adding, in a gayer tone, 'May I henceforth consider you as a relation, or have you imbibed any of the common prejudices against my nation?'

"You, who know how much I was really prejudiced in his favour, may guess that my reply met his approbation. 'My poor grandchild barely did you justice, I find, captain, though, believe me, she was eloquent in your praise; so was my friend Wrighton; but that rascal Donaghue, I fear I shall never

forgive him ; he must have withheld many of my last letters to the duke, to answer his own iniquitous ends. My poor Victoria was very fortunate in her selection of a protector, else what might have proved her fate ! and she died, happy in the certainty of your regard, therefore we ought not to lament her translation to a better world. I wrote you that I received the pictures, plate, and money, which you transmitted me ; the former decorate this and the adjoining apartment, since, if you are inclined to part with them, they shall be valued by a connoisseur, and I will become the purchaser.'

" I would have interrupted him, as I felt eager to offer them to his acceptance ; but he seemed to guess my intentions, as he continued—' I will not accept them ; I am much the richer man of the two, notwithstanding your money in the funds, to which I have added the six thousand pounds you sent over ;—and, for fear of accidents, I transferred the whole into your name, as I might die suddenly, I recollected. The plate I have also sold, and added the mo-

ney it produced to your stock. I recollect you mentioned having secured some jewels to my friend Wrighton—now, sir Anthony, at your service—did you dispose of them in Portugal?’

“I seized the opportunity to mention where I had left them, and what else I had brought over, which I wished to place under his care.—‘I will dispose of every thing to the best advantage for you, since I would not advise your retaining either jewels or plate; you can purchase either when required. But now, what will you take after your journey?—Have you dined?—or will you have some tea?—or had you rather return to the inn, whither my people shall accompany you, to remove every thing hither? I dare say your man and his wife may be depended upon; but they will not be sorry to be relieved from guard—bring them also hither, I desire; they shall meet a hearty welcome, and shall be my housekeeper’s guests while they stay in town,’ ringing the bell, and ordering a horse to be put into the cart immediately, and three or four of his men to get ready

to accompany me into Gracechurch-street, again pressing me to take some refreshment while the cart was getting ready; and to oblige the old gentleman, I descended with him into the dining-parlour, his friends having taken their leave when they learnt my arrival, where I drank a couple of glasses of wine, and eat some strawberries; when all being ready, I set out with my escort for Gracechurch-street, half repenting, I must acknowledge, having placed my cash in Thornhill's house; still, as you advised it, and as Victoria seemed to wish to act as I have done, I cannot have been wrong; yet, did I feel satisfied that I had done right, I should not feel so anxious to keep this excellent man in ignorance of my apparent want of confidence, which induced me to hasten forward before my party, to enforce the silence of Edward and Susan, whom I found expostulating with an impertinent chambermaid, who was declaring, *'they should not keep possession of one of the best apartments; if the gentleman who had placed them there did not return, she should have his things moved.'*

I overheard her speech as I advanced up the gallery, and now told her I would save her the trouble of removing either my servants or my baggage, as neither I nor them should sleep at the inn.

‘But you have taken possession of this room, sir, which I could have let over and over again within the last half-hour.’

‘Then you may do so now, as soon as you please, though I shall pay for it the same as if I had remained; but I shall do so at the bar, as I shall not reward you for being insolent; so go and give in your report accordingly.’ She departed muttering, and I briefly put Ned and Susan upon their guard, telling them where we were all going.

‘To my poor dear mistress’s grandfather, of whom she was so fond!’ cried Susan; while Ned renewed his professions of regard towards me; but Mr. Levi’s servants being arrived, the chests and the remaining strong box were soon placed in the cart. Edward carried the largest casket, Susan seized another, and I took charge of the one I had received from the monk; and

in this order we returned to this hospitable mansion, where all the treasures having been placed in a back-parlour, the door of which Mr. Levi secured, he declared he felt quite happy in the certainty that all was safe ; and having placed Ned and Susan under the care of the housekeeper, we sat down to tea in the drawing-room. I wished to have delivered the keys of the chests, &c. into his hands, but he gaily reminded me that he was a *Jew*. I should not have supposed him one, from his appearance—perhaps having so long appeared as a Catholic has been, in that respect, an advantage to him. His house is elegant, and neat in the extreme, and appears to be extremely well regulated. We had so much to say to each other, as he entered into many details respecting himself, and engaged me to do the same, that the evening soon slipped away. He obliged me to retire at an early hour, and I rose the moment I woke, to fulfil my promise to you, my kind friend ; ~~but as~~ I see Mr. Levi pacing the square from my window, I shall con-

clude my epistle with the assurance that you will ever rank foremost in the regard and affection of

“ CHARLES FRANKLIN.”

CHAP. II.

As our hero had made even a more favourable impression upon his host, it may be supposed they met with renewed cordiality at breakfast. Edward, who had attended the captain in his own room, had ran on for a quarter of an hour in Mr. Levi's praise ; and as he had been no less garrulous in 'praise of our hero to that gentleman, they had greatly risen in each other's esteem.

During their repast, Charles reverted to his military frock, requesting Mr. Levi would direct him to a good tailor.

“ I gave orders for mine to attend you this morning ; he is in high repute—at all events, he can quip you for the present, and my ~~house~~keeper shall provide for

all your other wants ; she is accustomed to make purchases for unmarried men, so you may safely trust to her judgment and discretion."

Charles assured him he placed implicit faith in both, adding, " I think the sooner Edward and Susan leave town the better, as their relations will be happy to see them, and they will assist them with their advice with regard to their future plans."

Mr. Levi was quite of his opinion, " but as you will be thus deprived of Edward's attendance, I can recommend a successor to him, in whom you may place equal confidence ; and as no man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre, it has been said, I think, that such people ought to be above the general run of menials."

" So do I, sir, and I shall feel most happy in having a person of whom you seem to entertain so good an opinion about me——"

The tailor was announced while our hero was speaking, who soon dismissed him, though he was very ~~refuse~~ ^{reluctant} in his orders, considering he wished to wear mourning

for his wife and father for another three months, never having considered his crape scarf as a sufficient compliment to the memory of either.

"Then now that business is settled," said Mr. Levi, "let us adjourn into my study, as I am very anxious to see what those chests and caskets contain; I am not wanted at my counting-house to day, and I have given orders to be denied to every one."

"I trust, sir, that you will not confine yourself on my account; I must shew myself at the War-Office during the course of the morning, since I am not yet quite released from military duty."

"Then you shall go there between one and two; my carriage shall be ready at that hour; I dine at five."

Charles made no objection to his proposal, as he did not wish to have it known he was in town, and his regimental frock and hat might induce many people to notice him, by whom he should else be overlooked in the crowd.

Having reached the study, some of Mr.

Levi's servants uncorded the two large chests, and then retired, when he secured the doors, telling our hero he might begin to unlock.

"First suffer me to deliver up what I consider as a most sacred charge," putting a small sealed packet into the old gentleman's hands; "that, with this casket," which he placed before him, "were given into my custody by the abbot of the Dominican monastery at ***, who professed himself to be a real penitent, and who made me promise, if I ever returned to England, to deliver both into your own hands; and I had taken proper precautions to have them safely transmitted to you, in the event of my death."

"I feel infinitely indebted to you, my dear captain, but I have no idea from whom either can have come. The abbot of a Dominican monastery! why surely!" tearing open the small parcel to remove his suspense: it merely contained a small key. "This opens the casket, I presume," hastily breaking the seals, and applying it to the lock; "it fits, so I shall soon know what

all this means." A letter first presented itself, which he threw on one side, while he raised some cotton, and absolutely started when he caught sight of what it had concealed. "The abbot was then, as I suspected, father Antonio, once my supposed confessor, and long my confidential friend; he betrayed me merely, as I feared, to gratify his own avarice, since I suspected he had secreted these jewels at the moment of my flight, when I would willingly have offered them as a bribe to any one who could have insured my safety—Poor miserable wretch! he dared not. I suppose, offer them for sale; but tell me, captain, what he said when he gave them into your hands? as I will not read his confession, for fear he should implicate the memory of those I wish to revere."

Charles understood his meaning, and approved of his delicacy, as he guessed he feared the duke D'Aranza had profited by his being denounced, therefore felt half-reconciled to having followed general Davers's advice, since so much ~~gold coin~~ must have strengthened suspicions he did not wish to indulge: but in answer to his question, he

minutely detailed what had passed between him and the dying monk.

“ May his penitence have proved acceptable in the eyes of Heaven !” cried the worthy Israelite, tearing his letter to atoms, while he said, “ I had received these jewels from Bassange, a diamond merchant at Paris, only the week before I was obliged to leave Cadiz ; they were for a jeweller at Madrid, to complete an order of the queen’s ; they cost me upwards of eight thousand pounds English, and are worth much more than that to me now, therefore I consider myself deeply your debtor.”

“ Because I did not, like the worthy monk, appropriate them to my own use,” replied the laughing Charles.

“ You may laugh, young honesty, but let me tell you, they might have fallen into the hands of those who would have thought it no sin to cheat a *Jew*, since they consider that epithet as synonymous to *rogue*. Now Donaghue, and some other Christians whom I could name, are known rogues, yet that does not cast a stigma upon their faith— But let us proceed to business—to you L

can open both my heart and mind ; yet you have heard that I have had my share of persecutions, and *Catholics*, I will not say *Christians*, were my persecutors."

Charles felt that he revered and respected the man, let him be Jew or Gentile, while he proceeded to unlock his own two caskets.

The first thing that Mr. Levi unwrapped from some cotton, was a present he had made his daughter ; it brought the tears into his eyes, while he exclaimed, " I am an old fool, since she is doubtless happy ; but I grow old and foolish ; you must not mind me, Charles—there, you see, my heart is on my lips, and that prompted this familiarity."

" You will oblige me, sir, by always calling me Charles—am not I your relative ?"

" You wish to make me proud, you young rogue," continuing to place the different articles, as he took them out, upon a table before him, exclaiming, " these diamonds are not to be matched in Europe. That necklace is of the finest water—nay, even these old jewels are of immense value ;

they will fetch a great price ; I know where to place them to advantage." Thus did he run on, till he had examined the contents of both caskets, when having again contemplated them for some minutes in silence, he said, turning to our hero, "What do you suppose they are worth?"

"I am not the least judge ; but you are, therefore I request you would do what you please with them."

"I believe I might make a pretty handle of your ignorance, my brave fellow, if I was what some Christians style a *Jew* at heart ; but before I make an offer, let us see what the chests contain—I am a wholesale dealer."

The one, as we already said, contained a small service of gold plate ; the other, the more valuable ornaments of the chapel ; and Mr. Levi hoped to find immediate purchasers for both ; and he was lost in calculations respecting the value of some of the articles, when a servant tapped at the door, and said "the carriage was ready." "Is it possible?" cried the old gentleman, looking at his watch ; "have we

been closeted these three hours?—Yes; so it is! so do you proceed to the War-Office, and I will meanwhile replace these jewels, &c. ; trust to me for making every thing secure: but you must take something before you go; I always lunch, and we shall find something set out in the next room.”

And certainly a most elegant morning repast stood prepared for them, to which having done honour, our hero departed, and Mr. Levi returned into his study, to replace the jewels, and to calculate their exact value.

CHAP.-III.

CAPTAIN Franklin met with a most gratifying reception at the War-Office, his name having been frequently mentioned in the dispatches, always in colonel, now general, Davers's letters: and he found he had besides some unknown friends, who were very anxious to accelerate his promotion, and to

whom he was indebted for his present title, as a sum of money had been deposited for the purchase of the first vacant company to which he could be entitled. Lord Malton had also mentioned him in terms of applause, and had added his recommendation to his secret friends; therefore he was assured that he might look forward to a speedy and farther promotion; while he received a present almost discretionary leave of absence, as the gentlemen in power seemed convinced that he would be eager to increase his laurels.

Never, therefore, was our hero in better humour with himself and mankind, than when he drove from the War Office, when recollecting his promise to the bankers, he ordered the coachman to stop in Cornhill, at the entrance of Change-alley, meaning to walk into Lombard-street, not wishing the servants to report his having called at Messrs. Thornhill and Co.'s during his drive. He endeavoured to guess to what unknown friend he was indebted for his captain's commission. His mother would not have kept him in the dark, had she been a party.

concerned—his late father would not have made a mystery of his interference—neither of his elder brothers would have advanced any money for his benefit—sir George certainly could have done so—John, except provided by his uncle, was not likely to have been able to raise the necessary sum: had his uncle done him the favour? it was not in his character; he would consult with general Davers, as he felt anxious to know to whom to return his thanks.

The carriage stopping as he had ordered, broke in upon his reflections. Having alighted, he desired it to wait, while he hastened to the banker's.

Mr. Thornhill received him in his private office, and promised to purchase India bonds and exchequer bills with his gold, and to put him in possession of those securities on Monday, any time after one o'clock, again asking him to accompany them to Clapham Common, as it was Friday, and Mr. Levi might have some engagements for that evening and the next day, which was his Sabbath, therefore, after six o'clock of the present day he did no business.

Our hero made no doubt of his statement being correct, but excused himself, under the plea of having letters to write to his family, and much private business to transact, ere he could visit his mother, resolving, as he returned to the carriage, to entreat Mr. Levi would make no stranger of him—nay, that he would turn him out of his presence, was he likely to be a restraint upon him, when he was seized, as he had been once before, by sir John Saunders, the unsuccessful candidate for lady Susan Delany's favour, and who had taken such an unfair advantage of her regard for her brother's reputation.

Though three years had elapsed since he had seen our hero, his dress and military hat made him instantly recollect him, and as instantly exclaim, "Charles Franklin! by all that is wonderful, who would ever have thought of meeting you, my hero, in 'Change-alley!—Why, I supposed you were gaining laurels in the Peninsula—however, give us your paw, for I am very glad to see you." They shook hands, and he continued—"How long have you been in

England?—and need I tell you that regimentals are very unfashionable, and are only tolerated when people are upon duty?”

“Your remarks are very just; but, like the Frenchman who told Louis the Fourteenth he would not feel the cold, if, like him, he carried his whole wardrobe upon his back, I have literally no other clothes, since I have not been twenty-four hours in London.”

“You could not have found a better reason for sinning against etiquette—so how is Skinflint? he is still in the land of the living, I know. What says he to your having gone for a soldier, rather than marry the lady he had selected for you?”

“I was not actuated by any dislike to lady Susan Delany when I became a volunteer; nor did my uncle and I separate upon that account. I have not seen him, nor any of my family, since my arrival; and I have no reason to suppose that my uncle would receive me, even were I, which I am not inclined to do, to put his hospitality to the test.”

“Egad, I like your spirit; the old fellow

must slip his wind ere long; but surely I have heard your brother John is now his adopted heir, so perhaps he means he should marry my late friend's sister. She must not be difficult now; I can tell you she has half ruined herself, a foolish toad, to discharge the earl's debts."

"I should have supposed her more prudent, from your former account of her."

"Oh, by Jove! she was more actuated by pride and caprice in so doing, than by any other motive. After you had taken yourself off, old Cent. per Cent. would not advance another guinea, had it been to save the earl's soul, so I raised all I could to accommodate the poor dying devil; and I would have given the silly girl time, had she condescended to ask it, to liquidate the debt; but she is as proud as Lucifer, so she spurned at my civil offers, and actually borrowed the money to pay me.—Report says she is going to vegetate in the North, at an old uncle's (lord Marchmont,) whose heiress it is thought she will be. She will pay pretty dearly for his money, if she is condemned to spend the prime of her life

under his roof, as he married a vulgar, low woman, the daughter of a country surgeon, whom he met at Harrowgate; and as he has a taste for bouncing beauties, and thought she knew a little of medicine, he has made her his wife, and constituted her his nurse. But what is all this to you? you will say; so tell me, did not you marry in Spain, after rescuing some fair lady from some French ravishers?—Had she any money?—Was she worth the trouble?—or did the Gallic heroes burn her castle to the ground?"

"They certainly did; but as she is no more, it is the less to be regretted."

"True; but I fear, as I have heard, that you played the fool, Charles, and are returned as poor as you set out; *Quixotism* does not thrive now in any soil:—but I must run, as I have an appointment at Garraway's with a fellow who has been selling an estate, in which I have, or had, a life interest."

Charles felt no wish to detain him, and was just stepping into the carriage in waiting, when the baronet, who had followed him, touched his arm, and whispered, "If you should see Skinflint, do not mention

what I said respecting his favourite lady Susan."

"You may rely upon my discretion," was the reply; while the baronet glanced his eyes over the handsome town coach and well-dressed coachman and footman, who was holding open the door, which induced him to add, "I shall be very glad to see you, captain, if you can give me a call, since, believe me, I hope *John* will yet be disappointed," and away he ran.

"Poor, mean, despicable being!" mentally exclaimed our hero, as the carriage moved forward, "since you appear to treat your friends well or ill, in proportion to their appearance; however, we shall never meet again by my choice; and should chance bring us together, I will convince you how low you stand in my estimation."

CHAP. IV.

WHEN he reached Finsbury-square, he found Mr. Levi too deep in calculation to think of inquiring where he had been, or who he had seen ; but hearing a carriage stop at his door, he peeped out of his study, and invited Charles to join him. Having again secured the door, he said, " I am glad you are so soon returned, my dear captain, though I have not brought my calculations to a conclusion ; but as we shall not dine this hour, we have time to do a vast deal of business—every thing is replaced, you perceive, therefore what is visible will not induce any one to break into the room, which could only be done by main force, as the locks are of a very peculiar construction, and the window, as you perceive, amply secured ; besides, I keep no servant in my house whom I could not, to the best of my belief, trust with untold gold ; still we are all liable to be deceived. But this is wandering from the

subject ; all I meant to say is, that upon my honour, every article is replaced as before ; *and if we do not come to an agreement, I will deliver up all the keys, much as I may regret having missed such a bargain.*"

Charles, in the same gay tone, declared he should implicitly trust to his honour.

" You soldiers fancy every man piques himself upon his honour, because you adhere so strictly to its laws ; but you should remember that I am a *Jew*, and you must have heard that some of our tribe would think it no sin to cheat their nearest relation ; and you certainly are, having married my only descendant, my nearest of kin—that you may think no *honour* ; but I do, since I have heard your military character from real judges of your merit ; and that every enterprize of difficulty in which you took an active part, was sure to prove successful, since you were said to unite perseverance with ardour, and calmness with both—prudence to avoid danger, with fortitude not to fear it."

And did you hear me thus praised by

the unknown friend to whom I owe my recent promotion?" asked our hero, impressed with the idea that Mr. Levi was that friend, and the old gentleman's rising colour confirmed the suggestion. Charles declared himself most happy in having discovered his benefactor, as he should not have enjoyed being equally indebted to every one.

"I did no more than my duty, my brave fellow—'where much is given, much is required;' and I rejoice at having been permitted to forward your wishes; may I live to see you a general, and as much beloved in the army as you are now! The character you bore would have induced me to exert all my interest, and to have advanced three times the sum for the good of my country, since to such officers we must look up for the termination of this cruel warfare. So to return to more peaceable concerns; I have covered nearly three sheets of paper, as you perceive, with odd kind of figures, which, to you, are truly Hebrew, or hieroglyphics; so as you cannot understand my wise calculations, please to tell

me what you will take for the whole, not including the coin, which amounts to upwards of ten thousand pounds; but I must make a sure bargain, and a good one, if I can."

"If I did not know that you wish to amuse yourself at the expence of my ignorance, I should feel half offended at your not fixing your own price, since had I not married as I did, all would have been yours."

"Providence orders every thing for the best; and I always thought when I took such pains to increase my riches, that I should find a use for them at last; so pray indulge my whim, by telling me what you suppose the property worth, which, so far from falling to my share, might, but for your marriage, have been claimed by some grandee—the hundredth cousin to the late duke. You preserved the life and honour of my granddaughter; she no longer wants any thing, therefore you stand in her place; and as I would have dealt with her, so I will with you, so help me God! So now you cannot scruple to tell me at what sum

you estimate the jewels, and next what you suppose to be the value of the plate."

Charles, who wished to oblige his generous friend, paused for a while, then said, "Perhaps the whole may be worth a hundred and twenty thousand pounds; I dare say I have overrated the value of the articles, but I wish to convince you that I may be trusted to make a bargain where my own interest is concerned; and to be very candid, I merely repeat what I was told by her whose loss we both deplore."

Mr. Levi paused in his turn as if reflecting upon the demand, then said, "Poor child! well, she is happy, and I rejoice at having left such an heiress to enjoy her riches—a hundred and twenty thousand pounds! she did not underrate them—but are you inclined to accept of that sum, if I should feel inclined to come up to your price?"

"I will even abate the odd twenty."

"How little have you profited by your uncle Franklin's instructions! he could have taught you more caution."

"Agreed, and he would have taught me to deny myself necessities, now when I shall be rolling in riches."

"Remember what Cumberland, the only author who ever thought of representing a benevolent Jew, says, 'Misers are not un-useful members of the community; they act like dams to rivers; hold up the stream that else would run to waste, and make deep water where there would be shallows;' so we must not blame Mr. Franklin, but we may pity him; however, as you are resolved to place such unlimited confidence in me, I shall not tell you the exact sum I mean to give you; the pictures are not yet valued."

"But, my dear sir, you will so far oblige me as to accept of them?"

"Why, I am already deeply in your debt; however, as they will remind me of former times, and were some of them gifts of mine to the duke, I will keep them while I live; when I die, they shall return to you; and this is depriving you of thirty thousand pounds, were you to sell them; but I trust you will suffer them to continue an heir-

loom in your family to the end of time ; I merely accept them to gratify your proud spirit, which does not allow you to feel easy under even a fancied obligation ; therefore, to come to the point at once, according to my calculations, in which I now include your money already in the stocks, and the gold in that box, I will insure you the principal of at least twelve thousand a-year, which will be a thousand pounds a-month, much about what I allow myself to spend, and I know you can support the rank of a gentleman upon that sum—hear me out, as I see you are inclined to fancy I am vastly generous, when, upon my *honour*, of which I am very choice, I shall have made a very fair bargain, and I shall continue deeply your debtor for the jewels restored, but still more for the pictures, which, as your gift, have acquired fresh value in my eyes. But I cannot finish the business this evening, as our Sabbath, you know, begins at six o'clock ; and having for many years been obliged to pay but little outward respect to it, I fancy myself obliged to observe it the more strictly now, therefore

you will not feel yourself neglected by my adhering to what I consider as my duty.—Your countenance tells me you approve of my notions, therefore you will suffer me to seclude myself, as I always do, from six this evening till the same hour to-morrow, since I cannot too often, nor too seriously, reflect upon my almost-miraculous preservation, nor be too thankful to the Giver of all good—But to return to this world. On Tuesday next, I will accompany you to the Bank, when I will put you in possession of one half of the sum I mentioned, that is, principal stock to the amount of six thousand a-year, at any price the funds may happen to be; and in a fortnight at farthest, and as much sooner as I can make it convenient, I will put you in possession of the whole sum—I could do so on Monday, since the word of Abraham Levi will pass for a tolerable sum; but I mean to take liberties with you; nor shall I offend you by offering you any security for my fulfilling my promise, since were I to die before I did so, my will—But I shall not talk of

futurity; and to talk of a will, which may be revoked ten times in a day, is very silly;" and before our hero could make any reply, they were summoned to dinner, at the very moment the clock was striking five. "My people move by clock-work, you perceive, else they would not suit me."

During dinner, the old gentleman said, "If you will allow me to dictate, you will go to one of the theatres this evening; the tailor will be here by six, I am certain; and Simmons, my housekeeper, has made a few purchases for you, I dare say; I have also ordered Sutton, the young man I mentioned to you, to be in waiting, as Edward and Susan depart to-morrow; you can give them your final orders before you go, as they propose sleeping at the inn from whence the coach they go by starts. To-morrow morning you can devote to your pen, as you wish to write to your mother and brother, and you may promise to sup with her on Tuesday; I cannot spare you before, and I hope you will not object to accompany me to-morrow evening, to visit our mutual friend sir Anthony Wrig-

ton, who has a most charming villa near Watford, a very pleasant woman, so his wife, and two fine girls, his wards, the daughters of a peer, who married his sister, and who, when he died, left them under his care. Sir Anthony was created a baronet about six months ago, and has lately come into a very large fortune by the death of his brother; he has therefore declined business, and become an agriculturist; he made me promise to bring you with me, whenever you became my guest, so I hope you will not disappoint neither him nor me."

"I shall be happy to renew my acquaintance with sir Anthony, and feel very much obliged to you for treating me in every respect as a relative."

"I knew I should not offend you, as you can respect even what you may deem deeds of supererogation; so now adieu till this hour to-morrow night, when all shall be ready for our departure for *Mount Ephraim*, as our friend has named his villa."

Charles returned his adieu, and left the room to go to his toilet.

One complete suit of clothes had been sent home, Edward, who was in waiting in his room, told him, and Mrs. Simmons had provided every other requisite; displaying black, grey, and white silk stockings, a couple of new shirts, and neck handkerchiefs; she could not get any finer ready made, and there would not have been time to wash any other; but she was to have some better ready against the next day. Hats, shoes, boots, nothing had been forgotten; and Edward next introduced his successor, a very smart young man, whose countenance prepossessed our hero in his favour—"Mr. Sutton has lived valet to a gentleman at college, sir, so I dare say you will find him more expert in that profession than I have ever been."

Charles smiled at this eulogium, and kindly dismissed the speaker, telling him he would take leave of him and Susan before he left home.

Sutton, who had been extremely prepossessed in his new master's favour, was very adroit, and, as Edward had said, perfectly *à fait* of the duties of his office.

While assisting our hero to change his dress, their discourse naturally turned upon Mr. Levi. Sutton spoke of him as one of the best of men ; he had left his master in consequence of a rheumatic attack, owing to a severe cold caught in his service ; and as he had not been very provident, nor his master did not prove very generous, he must have been reduced to very great straits, if Providence had not sent Mr. Levi to his assistance, who learnt his situation from the people where he lodged, who kept a chandler's shop in the Borough, and whom he had relieved from a state of great distress, since he never inquired whether those in want were of his own or any other persuasion, their poverty being a sure passport to his favour, though he did a wonderful deal of good among the poorer class of Jews, as he (Sutton) had heard Mrs. Simons say, that he gave away and loses some thousands among them every year ; and he allows all those out of employ to go to different wholesale dealers, by whom they are supplied, by his orders, with various sorts of goods upon credit, the first time ;

as when they have sold the lot they have taken, they must pay for them before they are entrusted with a second; and if they prove rogues, why, he pays the debt they have contracted, and they never dare apply to him again. "I dare say there are an hundred people or more who are now getting a decent livelihood, thanks to his liberality, as they are supplied with goods at a very cheap rate, I mean those Jews whom you may have remarked, sir, who ply about the 'Change and other places with slippers, boxes, baskets, pencils, shoe-strings, &c. If they are unsuccessful, he makes up their losses; and if they obtain a livelihood, and prove deserving, he continues their friend; but he will not maintain any one in idleness. I am sure he has saved my life; and while I was unable to obtain a livelihood, he paid for my board; therefore, independent of my wish to oblige so good a master as Edward reports you to be, sir, my gratitude towards Mr. Levi, will, I trust, render me deserving of your protection."

Charles was pleased with the fellow's reports and promises, only wishing that his

uncle followed so excellent an example, resolving to endeavour to emulate this truly worthy Jew.

Having completed his toilet, he hardly recognized his own figure in the glass, and thought mourning to the full as becoming as regimentals; whether or not, he resolved to wear it for the ensuing six months, though he understood from his mother that sir George had set the example of leaving off his mourning at the end of the six months.

Tea and coffee were waiting for him in the drawing-room, and while taking a cup of the latter, he took leave of Susan and Edward, upon whom he bestowed a parting present, and desired them to write to him as soon as they were settled, and if ever they stood in need of his assistance. He then, the carriage being at the door, proceeded to Covent Garden Theatre, where he saw Blue Beard in its full splendour, and thought the introduction of the horses a great addition to the stage effect, though the storming of the castle bore no great re-

semblance to the similar actions in which he had been engaged.

The carriage was in waiting, as he had ordered, without the croud, and he reached home soon after twelve. A tray of delicacies was set out for him; so having made a hasty supper, he retired, not to keep the servants up beyond their usual hour.

CHAP. V.

HE rose very early, and wrote an affectionate letter to his mother, but entered into no details respecting himself, promising to do so when they met, which he hoped would be on Tuesday, as business would detain him in London till then. He also wrote to Edward, assuring him that he would proceed to Oxford, if he could not make it convenient to give him the meeting at Claverton, adding, that he meant to call

upon sir George and John before he left town.

Having finished his dispatches, he began to reflect upon the past and anticipate the future. His uncle was generally uppermost in his mind, and he had certainly not felt more inclined to excuse his past conduct, by comparing it with that of his present host. Mr. Franklin's whole attention was so devoted to the accumulating of wealth, that his selfish soul was become incapable of every generous attachment. John might, if he could, conform to his caprices, and become his heir; but our hero doubted the old man's continuing long enough in the same mind to make a will; and if he did not, he feared sir George would grasp his property, as he had already done his father's. Well, Providence might, for some hidden end, thus direct matters; he was no longer in want of the old man's hoards; nor could he, if he had, have come up to the price he affixed to them, and he had enough to increase his mother's comforts, and to make a handsome addition to his sister's fortune; nor

should he forget his dear Edward. His friend Frazer required no pecuniary aid: should he, or should he not look in upon him that morning? He had never been introduced to his father and mother; they might inquire when he had seen his family, and express their wonder, should he, as he must, acknowledge that he had not seen either sir George or Mr. John Franklin, since he did not intend to visit them till he had settled his business with Mr. Levi; but that was no reason why he should delay visiting James Frazer, who was certainly dearer to him than either of them, and to whom, under Heaven, he was indebted for his present affluence, and for having been able to gratify his early wish to enter the army; he first recommended him to general Davers; his report of him had raised him many friends; therefore he would not delay the pleasure he anticipated in detailing the recent occurrences to this beloved friend.

Thus resolved, he descended to breakfast, which he took alone, but was informed that Mr. Levi would dine with him at five o'clock, previous to their departure for

Mount Ephraim. He was pleased with the information ; so telling Sutton he should be at home in time to dress, the tailor having sent him home a second suit, he sallied forth ; and as the morning was very fine, and he was, as has been said, a famous pedestrian, he soon reached Grosvenor-place, having decided to inquire for his friend, and not at present to seek an introduction to the rest of the family. Upon approaching the house, Charles looked up, that he might not mistake the number, never having been there ; he soon discerned what was to be his guide, but was fearful the family had left town, as all the upper windows were closed ; but being so near, he resolved to inquire after his friend's health, who might have left a letter with the servant who remained in charge ; he therefore knocked at the door, which was opened by a servant in mourning. " Surely," thought the now-agitated Charles, " my friend is not dead ! He wrote me he recovered but slowly ; he——"

The servant roused him from his reverie, by inquiring what he pleased to want ?

"Captain Frazer," he faltered out; "is he——"

"He is at home, sir," throwing open a parlour-door, and in another second he met the warm embrace of his favourite friend.—"God be praised!" he warmly ejaculated. "I really dreaded——" He stopped, as he now remarked his friend was in deep mourning.

"I guess what you feared, my dear Charles, and rejoice to find you would have so deeply regretted me—No; I am recovering slowly, I agree, but I am no longer in any danger; however, my career of glory is ended, and very few are the laurels I have obtained. I am to sell out of the army, since besides being disabled, I am unfortunately the heir to my father's estates. My elder brother died only twelve days ago, very suddenly. A gentle exercise having been repeatedly recommended to me, he, Robert the sailor, whom you have seen, and two other friends, would accompany me into the Park. When I sallied forth for my morning ramble, only thirteen days ago, we bent our way towards the up-

per Park, where the deer are confined, and frightened one, which was lying down on the side of a bank, by coming upon it unawares, which induced it to take such a leap down the hill, that it fired my party with emulation, and they chose to try which of them could leap the farthest, appointing me umpire. Each exerted their agility several times in turn, when poor John said, 'I feared he had hurt himself, as he felt a very strange sensation.' Being all, more or less, alarmed, we were for hastening home, and sending for some advice. It soon became evident that he had broken a blood-vessel; he reached home with difficulty; and notwithstanding the first medical aid, he expired early the next morning. My family removed immediately to my grandmother's at Richmond, leaving me and Robert here. He is gone down into the North with the funeral, and I remained here in expectation of seeing you, my dear Charles; so now tell me how you have done since we parted, when you arrived in town, &c. &c. &c.?"

Charles wishing to divert his friend's ideas,

entered into the most minute details respecting himself, his property, and his Jew relative. "I give you joy, my dear fellow; no one will make a better use of riches than yourself. Thank God you are now completely independent of Cent. per Cent., as that gambling sir John Saunders styles the counsellor; by the way, that swindling disgrace to his rank took, I have been assured, the most unfair advantage of lady Susan Delany's wish to preserve her brother's memory from disgrace; she paid his shameful demand to its full extent, which has done her the greatest honour, and he will in future be cut by every person of character. As you was once to have married her ladyship, I mention the circumstance, since you find she would not have disgraced your name, as she possesses a little of your own spirit."

Charles related when and where he had met the baronet, and applauded lady Susan's conduct; adding, "Who knows but John may now be directed to pay his addresses to her."

"I do not think *her spirit* has raised her

in your uncle's esteem ; nor do I believe John will be his heir ; I know he says he shall, and if his creditors believe him, he may escape their persecution ; for I have heard from pretty good authority, as I feel interested in every soul with whom you are connected, that he gambles very high at some of the inferior houses of that description—that he drinks hard—dresses well—keeps a lady, in short, that he lives up to three times his present income.”

“ I should have thought his wish to be my uncle's heir would have rendered him more prudent.”

“ He fancies he deceives every one ; but Robert, who has been in *the oven* himself, has let me into his real character, and the thousand pounds the baronet is to pay him may stop all gaps—By the way, sir George lives in the most shabby genteel style you can imagine. He continues in Gower-street, in what I call a very, very small house ; keeps but one carriage—a very mean establishment, and sees little or no company ; he has certainly imbibed a strong dose of Skinflint's propensity ; as for your Jew re-

lative, I long to make myself an interest in his regard."

"He is prepared to like you, so when shall I introduce you to him after to-day?"

"To day I cannot leave home, though poor John is buried; but I expect Robert home, and I should not choose to pay visits till he returns; to-morrow I dine at Richmond; but on Monday I will dine with you, if Mr. Levi will admit me."

"You will oblige him nearly as much as you will me; so adieu till then, as it is near two, and I wish to be at home by four, and mean to call upon Beaumanoir's uncle at Somers Town, as I return, since I wish to hear how the poor fellow does; and from his account, I have formed a very high opinion of the priest."

"I grieve to find you take much more after your *Jew grandfather* than after your Christian uncle, and how far you are in the right road, I cannot pretend to say, since some dissenters fancy faith more efficacious than good works; so adieu! I shall merely tell my family I have seen you, as I should not wish you should hear that you are richer

than sir George, till you choose to display your wealth ; if I hear nothing to the contrary, expect me in Finsbury-square by five on Monday."

Thus the friends parted, and Charles hastened to Somers Town. His direction was so clear, that he had no difficulty in finding the house, and upon inquiry, was told that the *ci-devant* canon, Mr. De Sade, inhabited the front room, two pair of stairs, and was at home ; he therefore ascended the not-very-cleanly steps ; and as the door was open, he entered the room, where he perceived a man apparently very busy, stooping over a small fire, who turned his head upon hearing footsteps behind him. He had the appearance of what he was—a decayed gentleman, and now politely inquired " what had procured him the honour of this visit ? " Charles explained the motives of his intrusion in a very few words ; but the instant he ~~declined~~ his name, the old gentleman threw down a knife and fork which he had in his hand, exclaiming, " We are old friends, Mr. Frank-

lin ; my nephew always mentions you in his letters ; I am happy to see you in England !”

“ You are very obliging, sir ; how is captain Beaumanoir ?—have you seen him lately ?”

“ We have not yet met ; he is a prisoner upon his parole, but more than a hundred and twenty miles from London ; he could not easily obtain leave to come and see me, and I cannot afford to take such a journey, admitting I could obtain leave from the Alien-Office to leave London. Excuse me for a moment,” he added, with a smile, “ as you perceive my dinner is spoiling ; no one knows what they can do till adversity obliges them to exert their talents ; formerly I had only to eat my dinner—now I must cook it, if I would have any to eat ; and to-day I am going to sit down to a feast, and a very cheap one, as this beautiful mackarel cost me only ~~three~~ three-pence.”

“ I can only regret that the mistaken ideas of liberty which your countrymen formerly entertained, have reduced you to such meagre fare.”

“ At first I found it rather hard ; but now, I assure you ; I feel comparatively happy, as I have the more time to prepare myself for a better world ; and I am very grateful to Providence, and to this generous nation, for the support afforded me.”

“ I will not intrude upon you any longer just now, sir ; I will take a short turn, and look in upon you again, when you have dined.”

“ I request you would not stir ; it matters not when I dine ; but I shall not be many minutes, if you will keep your seat ; I have no second course to-day.”

The old gentleman seemed so cheerful, and made so light of his misfortunes, that our hero did not feel inclined to move, conscious that he should oblige him by remaining, and in ten minutes he had eaten three parts of his mackarel ; the remainder, he said, would serve him for supper. Having set it by, he took off his gridiron, saying, “ I shall clean that another time.” He then gaily discussed the French and English mode of living, and acknowledged the

latter were both cleaner and nicer in their notions; then reverted to his nephew, from whom he had heard several times, and from whom he had received a small supply of cash to pay postage, though he, poor fellow, had been disappointed of remittances—"He always mentions you, sir, in the kindest terms, though you were the means of his visiting England: I should like to see him; we could talk over family affairs so much better than we can write about them—but I cannot walk so far, nor can I afford to pay for riding, admitting I obtain permission to visit him."

"When can you go, supposing I applied in your behalf to the Alien Office? as I will afford you the means to perform the journey."

"You are very kind, young gentleman, but I have no right to expect such a favour at your hands, since, if I understood my nephew right, you do not rank among the rich men of this wealthy nation."

"Believe me, I am not among the poorest, and should be very ungrateful to that Providence who has blessed me with abun-

dance, if I did not share it with those, who, like you, can patiently bear adversity—you will oblige me by accepting that trifle,” putting a twenty-pound note into his hands; “and if my interference will prove of any avail at the Alien-Office, I will attend you thither any day the week after next.”

The good canon was both gratified and amazed; and resolved, after expressing his gratitude in the most chosen terms, to remember this generous friend in his daily orisons; but politely declined giving him any further trouble, till he had made his application at the Office; should it fail, he promised to avail himself of our hero's kind offer, who took his leave, very much prepossessed in his favour, having requested he would say every thing that was kind to his nephew in his name; and perhaps he felt the happiest of the two, as he rejoiced at having it in his power to oblige so worthy a man, and resolved, like Mr. Levi, to seek out the deserving poor, and make them partakers of his abundance.

CHAP. VI.

WHEN he reached Finsbury-square he repaired to his toilet, and, as he expected, found some more linen ready to put on, and every article he had ordered at the tailor's come home. Sutton told him while he was dressing, that he had received orders to be in readiness to accompany him to Ephraim Lodge, and to pack up what he would require for the two nights they were to spend there.

Charles left every thing to his discretion, and soon joined his benevolent friend, who declared he hardly knew him in mourning; adding, "as your figure and your exploits are those of a hero of romance, I am sure you will prove a most acceptable guest to sir Anthony's wards—So now tell me what you have done, and where you have been this morning?—not that I mean to be curious, but I feel interested in every thing which concerns you."

"You gratify my vanity by such an ac-

knowledge,” briefly relating the occurrences of the morning.

“Your friend does me honour, and must be a most welcome guest; I shall write him so before we leave town. His brother’s was indeed a short warning—I am glad his place will be so well supplied to his parents. You must also introduce me to your French priest; I have known some very deserving emigrants of his profession, who, like him, bore adversity with unshaken firmness—But dinner is upon table, and I hope we shall be as grateful for our abundance, as he was, poor fellow, for his mackerel.”

Their repast, like that of the day before, was elegantly luxurious; and at half-past six Mr. Levi’s post-chaise and four, which had a travelling seat, or dicky, for the servants behind, drove up to the door; and while the seat was being put in, and the rest of the baggage consigned to the pockets, our hero, who was standing at one of the windows, said, “Those are four very fine horses.”

“So they ought to be; I pay an enor-

mous price for them to the man to whom they belong ; yet, upon the whole, I think mine a saving plan ; I used to keep five horses of my own, but as I could not often visit my stables, my coachman took advantage of my supineness, since my bills for hay, straw, and corn, were enormous, and one or other of the horses were always under the farrier's hands ; the oftener I changed them, the worse I was suited ; till at last my patience being quite exhausted, I resolved, as I had often been advised, to job my horses, and I have never had any trouble either with men or beasts since ; and am money in pocket every year."

Charles agreed he adopted a very prudent method ; and as every thing was ready, they stepped into the carriage. Sutton, and a servant of Mr. Levi's, ascended the dicky, and they began their journey.

The road was very pleasant, and had the charm of novelty to our hero, who saw much to admire as they advanced ; and just as the sun was sinking beneath the horizon, he caught sight of a most elegant, rural abode, which stood in a delightful park ;

and the nearer they approached, the more beauties he descried, when the postillions pulled up rather suddenly.

“What, stopped upon the king’s highway!” cried the gay old gentleman; “and I am afraid the sun is too low to admit of our seeing the country.”

“Will you alight?” cried a gentleman, in whom our hero recognised his Lisbon friend.

“With all my heart.”

The servant, who had got down when the carriage stopped, opened the door, and the old gentleman, while descending the steps, continued, “To insure my welcome, I have brought captain Franklin with me.”

Sir Anthony instantly addressed our hero, who, springing out of the carriage, gladly renewed their acquaintance, and was then introduced to lady Wrighton and the honourable Miss Ellingtons, who struck him as being fine fashionable young women; and they might have appeared to still more advantage but for a third young lady, who, with a fine, strait, handsome, middle-aged.

woman, remained in the background, who now advancing, cried, "Pray extend your ceremony, sir Anthony; I am very partial to a soldier."

She was in consequence introduced to our hero and Mr. Levi as lady Marchmont, and her companion as lady Susan Delany, whose rising colour convinced our hero that she was acquainted with his uncle's former schemes respecting their union. He had long felt rather curious to see this fair lady, who far surpassed his most sanguine expectations in point of appearance, though even sir John Saunders had acknowledged she was handsome; if, however, her disposition tallied with his description, he felt that his heart would be steeled against her charms, but was not sorry that chance had introduced them to each other's notice. He now learnt that she and lady Marchmont had been drinking their tea at the baronet's, and the latter lady, not liking to be out after the dew began to fall, sir Anthony and his family had accompanied them to the entrance of lady Susan's demesne, who was the owner of the seat our hero had

been admiring, and which was the identical Rose Hill his uncle had so long coveted, and was now actually in treaty for the purchase.

Lady Marchmont, who made a point of speaking her mind, paid our captain many very flattering compliments, and wished him and the party to have walked up to the house.

Sir Anthony and lady Wrighton begged to be excused—"It was growing dark, therefore neither of their visitors would see the beautiful villa to advantage—another time they would petition for leave to walk over that and the grounds."

Lady Susan, to whom this speech was particularly addressed, made a very polite reply, and the parties separated, lady Wrighton leading the way with Mr. Levi towards their own grounds, the carriage having been sent forward.

The Miss Ellingtons, who thought Charles a very fine fellow, followed arm in arm, wishing to know rather more about him before they condescended to be familiar. Sir Anthony had not prepared them to ex-

pect him, and a captain in the army was not likely to be a rich man.

Charles, whose thoughts were solely devoted to lady Susan Delany, walked with sir Anthony, and bestowed some very judicious praises upon Rose Hill.

“It is a most delightful place,” said the baronet; “the house is most elegantly fitted up, and exactly suited to its present owner; I therefore extremely regret her determination to part with it, though I honour her for having discharged her brother’s debts. Pity so generous a deed should oblige her to give up this pleasant residence. Lord Marchmont, her maternal uncle, advises her to do so; and as he does not choose, or perhaps cannot advance the money to clear off the mortgages upon this and an adjoining estate, which she inherited from her brother, she must part with both, since Mr. Franklin, your uncle, if I mistake not, captain, was inclined to foreclose. He is now in treaty for both estates; if he does not come up to the price at which they have been valued, they are to be sold by auction; except a more ad-

vantageous offer is previously made her ladyship's solicitor "

" I am very sorry my uncle is so inexorable a creditor ; I know he advanced large sums to the late earl ; but I understood Rose Hill was lady Susan Delany's own."

The baronet explained how and why she had involved herself, declaring, as Frazer had done, that sir John Saunders had taken a most unwarrantable advantage of her ladyship's regard for a weak, extravagant brother ; adding, " the fact is, he hoped to have persuaded, or rather frightened her into marrying him ; but she had long appreciated and despised his character, and I do hope that she will not be so very great a loser in the end, since she is sole heir to her uncle, who, at an advanced age, married the buxom lady you have seen, and who is related to lady Wrighton ; but that does not blind either her or me to her failings, which originate in ignorance and self-conceit. She has been at Rose Hill for the last month, and lady Susan is to return with her to Belton Hall, the earl's seat, as soon as she has disposed of this villa, and the es-

tate I mentioned, for which, I have already told you, your uncle Franklin is in treaty; but he has not as yet come to the proposed terms—indeed he wishes to obtain them considerably under their value, therefore I expect they will finally go to the hammer.”

Our hero felt hurt at this very natural conjecture, and wished lady Susan would allow him to take the mortgages upon himself, that he might release her from the sort of thralldom in which his uncle held her. She was extremely handsome—that might render him more anxious to serve her: be that as it may, Mr Levi had been running on in his praise, till lady Wrighton wished he might propose for one of her nieces. He was very rich, very handsome, and of a good family; she therefore resolved to advise the Miss Ellingtons to pay him some attention, and, as a preliminary step, redoubled her own politeness.

Ephraim Lodge had once belonged to a Quaker, and was a very pleasant, convenient abode; more remarkable for its neatness, than the superior elegance of its de-

corations; but the genuine hospitality of its owners made up for all deficiencies.

A hint from lady Wrighton rendered the Miss Ellingtons all attention to our hero, and very eager to learn his opinion of Spain. He would have been more amused by their visible endeavours to display their charms and accomplishments, had he not seen lady Susan Delany; but her fine eyes, and the beautiful abode she was obliged to sell, were continually uppermost in his mind. He would apply to Mr. Levi to advance her the money; or if she was obliged to sell, he would make the purchase upon her own terms, since perhaps his uncle was the less inclined to show her any favour, owing to her not having come into his plans. These reflections rendered him often absent; but upon the whole, the evening went off very pleasantly; but he could not go to bed with so many vague ideas respecting his wish to serve this elegant lady Susan floating in his brain; he therefore accompanied Mr. Levi into his apartment, to ask his advice how to proceed.

“What think you of my friend’s wards?”

was the old gentleman's first question, having previously dismissed his servant.

"I dare say they are very amiable; they seem very accomplished, and are very rich, therefore cannot fail of being well married. I feel much more interested for lady Susan Delany, as I fear my having left my uncle (though by his own desire), as it deranged his plans respecting that lady, has rendered him less inclined to show her any favour," detailing the conversation which had past between him and Mr. Franklin respecting that lady.

"So, so! she was the lady he alluded to when he told me he had an excellent match in view for you; for her ladyship's sake I wish you had met rather sooner; for my own, I am very glad dame Fortune deranged your uncle's plans; but as you seem to think she may have been a sufferer, owing to his pique against you, as he has forgotten that he is indebted to you for his existence, suppose, if he does not come up to the price she asks, you purchase Rose Hill; and if you also like the lady, why, I dare believe you may venture to seek

her hand. She must know—nay, her confusion when you so unexpectedly met, convinces me that she was informed of your uncle's plans, and I dare say she was not averse to them. She must have a handsome surplus when the estates are sold; and as she is lord Marchmont's heir, she will, in the end, be very rich—My old friend here speaks highly in her favour."

"Are not you, my dear sir, falling into my uncle's error—laying plans which may never be fulfilled? so short an interview has not enabled me to judge of lady Susan's disposition, mind, or understanding; I am besides in no haste to marry—glory is a soldier's mistress; but I am really anxious to prevent her being a loser by her affection for her brother, and my uncle's spirit of avarice and revenge; therefore I will certainly buy Rose Hill and the other estates, if he does not take them at her own price, since to him they merely appear desirable, if he can obtain them a bargain. Situation, elegance of arrangement, convenience, &c. are of little comparative value in his eyes."

"I can believe you; and as you were.

struck with the beauties of Rose Hill, you must and shall have it, whether you marry the present owner or not ; but I consider her and you as old acquaintance, and I cannot suppose her having been selected for you by Mr. Franklin renders her less beautiful in your eyes."

" Surely not ; but I will not keep you any longer from your repose ; to-morrow we will renew the subject, as far as regards the purchase of the estates—the lady and I must be better acquainted, before I offer myself to her acceptance."

" She will improve upon intimacy, I prophesy — But good night, and pleasant dreams ;" and thus they separated ; but each were too busy laying plans for the future, to enjoy much sleep, till morning had long taken the place of night.

CHAP. VII.

WHEN lady Marchmont and lady Susan Delany reached home on the same evening, the former, who had merely remained silent, during their short walk, owing to her apprehension of being overheard, exclaimed, "So this is the old miser's nephew, lady Susan, to whom your brother had engaged, if not sold you? Well, he is a very fine fellow; if he was still likely to be the old fellow's heir, I think you could not make a better choice."

"I thought we poor women could seldom pick and choose, my dear madam; besides, if sir John Saunders is to be believed, which is rather doubtful, this very captain Franklin went to Spain as a volunteer, to avoid being forced into a marriage with me."

"That fellow is made up of lies and wickedness; but did not sir Anthony tell us some time ago, this Franklin had married some Spanish grandee's daughter, by

whose death he had come into a large fortune?"

"He did; and he also spoke in the highest terms of captain Franklin, whom he saw at Lisbon immediately after the death of his wife; and as he hinted that he would probably be Mr. Levi's heir, whoever he marries will have no reason to dread the approaches of poverty, which so often turns love out of doors."

"Then you are a fool," cried the plain-spoken, if not vulgar lady Marchmont, "if you do not strike up to him. Those Ellington chits do not deserve such a prize; and you will stand a great chance of dying an old maid if once you are immured in our old Castle, as we see no company, the physician, apothecary, and vicar excepted. For my own part, I should die of ennui if my spirits failed me; but I am accustomed to my lord's strange ways—still I can and shall feel for you."

"You are very kind; so I believe I must draw upon your spirits, should mine fail me, as I fear *this brave knight-errant* will not choose me for his *dulcinea*."

This was said in a very gay tone ; but lady Marchmont, who dreaded lady Susan's obtaining any influence over her lord, and sincerely wished any event might occur to prevent her northern journey, returned to the charge, till she found she was more likely to mar than to forward her schemes by her persuasions ; she therefore resolved to sound our hero, and to hold out such temptations to him, he might be induced to second her views, and to relieve her from this dreaded rival. Fortunately they were engaged to dine at the baronet's ; and as she had drawn in an old cunning rake to marry her, and now nearly governed him, surely she could bring this boy and girl together, if she set about it in good earnest. Thus resolved, she, like our hero, fell asleep, and woke determined to bring her plan to bear.

The party at Ephraim Lodge, Mr. Levi excepted, attended morning service at Watford, and then having called for that gentleman, took an airing in the environs ; but no seat met their eye to equal Rose Hill, in our hero's opinion, which he acknowledged

in answer to a question of lady Wrighton's.

"Then why do not you become its purchaser?" said sir Anthony; "I dare say Mr. Franklin will not come to the price required, therefore why not request lady Susan to give you the refusal, if he does not close with her terms?"

"I mean to make the proposal to her," replied Mr. Levi. "The captain wished to purchase some landed property; and as both house and grounds have taken his fancy, I hope he will not let them slip through his fingers."

"I wish you, sir Anthony, would break the ice for us, as I am anxious to learn how matters stand with Mr. Franklin."

"Lady Marchmont will not keep us in suspense," rejoined the baronet, "and to her I shall apply, as I am interested in securing such a neighbour, since good society is particularly desirable in the country."

Lady Wrighton spoke to the same effect, and the Miss Ellingtons declared, "it was a very happy thought of Mr. Levi's," appearing to think they were parties concerned in our hero's admiration of Rose Hill.

When they returned home, the subject was renewed, and from the house the conversation naturally reverted to its owner, of whom both sir Anthony and lady Wrighton spoke in the highest terms; even the Miss Ellingtons agreed she was an amiable young woman, declaring they grieved to think she seemed doomed to a life of seclusion.

The appearance of her and lady Marchmont broke in upon their lamentations. The latter paid her compliments in her usual blunt way; lady Susan in appropriate terms to each; but as they were almost immediately summoned to dinner, mere general conversation passed during their meal. Lady Marchmont talked politics, or rather repeated her lord's opinions, generally addressing our hero, and always appealing to him, if she was not allowed to be rightly informed. Lady Susan said but little, but generally spoke to the purpose, thought Mr. Levi; of course our hero did not differ in opinion; but the cloth being removed, and the ladies having withdrawn, sir An-

thony requested a few moments' conversation with lady Marchmont, to whom he imparted our hero's wishes.

"He shall have the estates, or my name is not Martha! as for that pitiful, sneaking fellow, his uncle, I shall glory in disappointing him. There has he been haggling for this month, because he will not take the fixtures and the furniture at a fair valuation; he wants the whole to be made over to him gratis—a poor, mean wretch! who is rolling in wealth, and yet grasping for more. I have never forgiven him for threatening to foreclose. My lord would not have interfered between him and Susan, but for that menace; he shall give us his final answer by Thursday at latest, or I will know the reason why; and as I know he will play on and off, you may tell the captain he may consider the bargain as concluded; but as he must not buy a pig in a poke, I shall invite you all to breakfast to-morrow—Send him on forwards; I will be ready to receive him, and he may trust to me for securing him the estate."

Mr. Levi was now summoned to join them, and was happy to find her ladyship was so inclined to oblige his favourite.

While they were thus closeted, our hero and the three younger ladies took a ramble in the grounds. "Which were very inferior to those of I use Hall," said the Miss Filingtons, who seized the opportunity to criticize the style of living of their guardian. Lady Susan defended sir Anthony with great good humour, declaring that she had not seen any parties more elegantly entertained, nor hospitality more unalloyedly disinterested than by the baronet and his family. All then joined in their praises. The conversation then changed the subject, and they began to talk on botany, till they discovered Lady Susan was much more fitted to shine as a botanist, having made a study of the science; they therefore next lamented her removal into the North, declaring "they should detest being so secluded."

"At all events, I shall have full leisure to botanize," she gaily replied, "and I am convinced that we are more dependant for

happiness upon our own minds than upon our situation, though I agree some are very trying to the patience, even of those most inclined to bear and forbear."

Our hero warmly assented to the justice of this remark.

"I can suppose you speak feelingly, captain Franklin," she rejoined, "as you resided for some time with your uncle, whom my late brother thought rather capricious, and I have found him rather unpersuadable."

"He is, and continues to be his own enemy," replied Charles, "since with every means of happiness within his grasp, he suffers that to elude his search. Mr. Levi is his exact contrast: he grows wealthy by being a common good—Mr. Franklin by being a general evil; Mr. Levi has the art of trade—Mr. Franklin the craft of his profession; when the former is a gainer, all those he deals with are the better—but whenever the latter makes what he thinks a good bargain, those he deals with are certain losers."

"You have exactly defined the two characters. My brother thought as you do ;

but he never expressed himself so much to the purpose. "You were at Eton with my brother, he has told me."

Charles replied in the affirmative, and hoped her ladyship would do him the honour to consider him in future as the late earl's friend, and as such, very anxious to serve her in any way she thought likely to promote her interest or welfare.

Lady Susan gaily replied, "he seemed to have studied gallantry in Spain;" adding, "take care I do not put your proffered friendship to the test, since I am convinced you are sincere in your offers."

Miss Ellingtons, who did not relish the turn the conversation had taken, proposed returning home, where they were greeted, by the smiles of lady Wrighton, and the more boisterous mirth of lady Marchmont, who addressing our hero, said, "I engage you to breakfast with me, captain; I am an early riser.—Lady Susan, you may invite the rest of the party; but the captain is my guest, as he and I have some matters of business to discuss."

Lady Susan did as she desired, and all present readily agreed to take an early breakfast at Rose Hill, previous to Mr. Levi's and our hero's departure for town. The young ladies next displayed their musical talents; lady Susan bore away the palm; and lady Marchmont, who read her triumph in our hero's eyes, was in unusual good spirits when they departed, and lost no time in making our hero's wishes known to her companion, who declared, "much as she wished the business were finally settled, she should much rather the nephew than the uncle become the possessor of Rose Hill."

"I believe you, since, take my word for it, you will be solicited to continue mistress there. Captain Franklin did not leave England to avoid you; more likely to banish you from his mind, when he lost all hopes, owing to his quarrel with his uncle."

"Surely, my dear madam, you fancy I am very far gone in the regions of romance; as my brother's friend, I esteem captain Franklin; and I construe his wish to purchase the estates into a desire to serve me, as he does not wish his uncle, of whom

he spoke as he deserves, should profit by my brother's imprudence, nor by my wish to preserve his fame; but he is not, nor very probably never will be, my lover."

"I tell you the game is all in your own hands; only let me manage matters, and I will engage to have him at your feet before he takes possession."

"I make no doubt of your talents, my dear aunt, but I must request you will not interfere in this business, since I cannot believe that the captain's acknowledged wish to purchase Rose Hill has any reference to his regard for me, except as a friend."

"And what is friendship between people of your age, and of different sexes, but *love*? I am no novice, and I repeat, the young soldier is already your lover; I have not forgotten my younger days; but I had no kind relative to assist or forward my views; and my father and mother wished me ~~to~~ marry so well, that I withstood my market, and became your aunt, and the nurse to an infirm old man, who boasts of his reformation, because his constitution obliges him to do penance for the past.

He will wish to marry you to some old dotard of his own standing, as a matter of prudence; but if the captain comes to the point, take him at his word, since where did you ever see a handsomer man?—as to family, take away his uncle, they are all respectable, and he is now related to a score of grandees, I suppose. Mr. Levi is a Jew; that may stick in my lord's gizzard; but I say he is a better man than many Christians, and his money will add to your comforts; so do not stand shilly-shally, expecting some greater offer, but 'snap at this, and dazzle those Ellington girls (who often quiz me, silly sluts!) with your wedding paraphernalia."

Lady Susan affected to consider this as half joke, and replied accordingly, though when she retired for the night, she could not avoid wishing her aunt's reveries might become realities, since she had seen captain Franklin twice before he went abroad, but merely in public, still he had made so agreeable an impression upon her, that she should have entered into the miser's plans without hesitation; and from her brother

she had learnt to esteem him, and to regret that he had withdrawn himself from his uncle's protection, respecting which event there were various stories; but the late earl had guessed the truth, and had easily ascertained the fact; and if she liked him before, his having become a military hero had not lessened his merits. She was therefore resolved that her *brother's friend* should have no reason to complain of his reception at Rose Hill.

CHAP. VIII.

MR. Levi repeated to our hero, when they retired for the night, all that had passed between lady Marchmont and his friend, and, like her, he felt anxious to bring about a match between him and lady Susan, who, he affirmed, had not seen him with indifference; at all events, he now hoped Mr. Franklin would not come into the very reasonable terms required of him, as the

estates were more than within his (Charles's) purchase, and would, in his opinion, be a real bargain, since he would make full five per cent. of his money, not including the house and home grounds; its vicinity to the metropolis was an additional advantage, and which would certainly have enhanced its value, had it been put up to auction.

Charles assured him he required no persuasions to purchase Rose Hill, since he really wished to oblige lady Susan, without at present intending to marry her: he might render his uncle more his enemy by thwarting his views; but that he thought of little consequence, when put in competition with his motives for wishing to possess this villa. He had not yet fulfilled the promise he had made his sisters, and perhaps he never intended to do so; at all events, he could not regulate his conduct by his caprice, nor by his dread of increasing his displeasure, since it would not give him a moment's concern.

Mr. Levi applauded his spirit, declaring that to crouch to such a man, was, in his opinion, abject to a degree: it was therefore

settled that Charles should proceed to Rose Hill by eight o'clock, when he would have time to walk over the grounds and the house uninterrupted by the Wrighton family, with whom Mr. Levi would follow at the appointed hour.

Charles did not oversleep himself, as he was walking in the shrubberies at Rose Hill before the clock had struck eight. Every thing was in such exquisite order—the plants were so elegantly arranged, that it was evident, in his opinion, a *female* had superintended the whole, since the flowers were blended not only with taste, but with the judgment of a *botanist*.

Lady Marchmont, who had been looking out for him, soon joined him, complimenting him upon his punctuality, and leading the way to the kitchen-gardens, hot-houses, &c.

Charles approved of every part of the arrangements; lady Marchmont gave all the credit to lady Susan, declaring that she was rejoiced at the idea of our hero's coming into possession of this elegant

abode, since old Franklin had not discovered half its beauties, and had behaved shamefully from the beginning ; but she had resolved that it should have gone to the hammer if he had not come into the terms, since not a shilling should have been thrown back to humour him. Leading the way into the house, which was fitted up in the modern style of elegant simplicity—" Now is not it exactly suited for the retirement of a man of fashion, since the appraiser who valued the furniture declared ' it displayed all the newness of style, and all the luxury of foreign importations ? ' He was a good puff ; but it is certainly a sweet place."

" It is indeed, ma'am ; there is an air of coolness and of simplicity throughout the whole which I particularly admire ; you may easily perceive that a *female* hand has given the finishing touches to the scene."

Lady Marchmont was delighted to find him so pleased ; and having reached an elegant boudoir, she pointed out some very well-executed paintings and drawings, as proofs of lady Susan's skill ; a variety of

other ornaments, designed and ornamented by the same hand, were distributed in every apartment, and they were all pointed out to Charles by his conductress, who said, "Lady Susan meant to remove them, at least the pictures and drawings, as they were not included in the furniture: should you become the purchaser," she went on, "perhaps you will give them house-room for a short time; Mr. Franklin did not seem to think them worthy notice; but he expects all the furniture, greenhouse plants, &c, should be given him. That I will not allow; they have been valued by the fellow I mentioned at two thousand pounds, and they would be cheap at three, so not a farthing shall our attorney abate from so reasonable a demand; and as I know he will not buy what he politely calls gew-gaws and lumber, I consider you as the future owner of Rose Hill; and here comes the present, to bid you welcome."

Lady Susan did so, in very flattering terms, and Charles declared himself delighted with the house, furniture, and grounds.

and ready to give the full sum at which the whole were valued.

“Then now, Susan, we have old Franklin on the hip ; let him receive the money he advanced, but he shall reap no benefit from his ungentlemanlike proceedings. I waited upon him, captain, to expedite matters, and could hardly obtain a civil answer from him—a brute ! ‘He must have his money ; my niece was a fool, and I wanted to make one of him ; he should not pay for old furniture, and if it was not thrown in, he could not have the house.’—You never heard such a wretch ! and now I am determined he shall come to the point by Wednesday—you shall not be kept in suspense, captain.”

Charles made no doubt of his uncle having been as rude as she represented, but requested she would not hurry either him or herself upon his account ; he was going into Buckinghamshire the next day, to see his mother.

“And when do you return to town ?” asked lady Marchmont.

“On Thursday, I rather suppose.”

“Then only set off an hour sooner, as Claverton is not far from Chesham, I understand, and you can breakfast here; by that time I will have Mr. Miser Franklin’s final answer, if I pay him another visit to obtain it.”

Lady Susan readily joined in the invitation, declaring, “She now hoped her favourite plants and her small aviary, which she had intended to have removed, would fall into good hands.”

“I will be answerable for their being taken care of,” rejoined the now anxious lady Marchmont, “and that you will be permitted to visit them whenever you choose.”

“My invitation would be too premature,” said Charles, “else I should say I wish her ladyship would always consider herself at home here.”

“Only purchase the house,” cried the elder lady, “and then who knows what you may persuade her to do.”

The arrival of the other guests afforded some relief to the confused lady Susan, as they adjourned into the breakfast-parlour

where lady Marchmont never suffered the conversation to languish, as she repeated all that passed between her and Charles—mentioned their engagements, which met Mr. Levi's entire approbation—in short, never ceased talking till that gentleman's postchaise was announced, when she reluctantly suffered him and our hero to depart, reminding the latter of his Thursday's engagement, and abusing his uncle, in the same breath. Sir Anthony hoped he should have so pleasant a neighbour, and was equally anxious to insure the captain's future visits.

The intended purchase afforded our hero and Mr. Levi ample subject for conversation during their drive to town, and the old gentleman rejoiced to find his favourite was extremely prepossessed in lady Susan's favour. Lady Marchmont, they both agreed, was a vulgar, unpleasant, though not a bad-intentioned woman; and Charles made no doubt of her obliging *Mr. Miser* to say yes or no within the given time.

When they arrived in Finsbury square, Mr. Levi said he had a great deal of busi-

ness to transact before dinner, as he wished by the next day and by that hour, to put our hero in possession of the promised sum; and while he went to his counting-house, to make the preparatory arrangements, Charles said he would proceed into Grosvenor place, and bring his friend to dinner; and in his way thither he called upon Messrs. Thornhills and Co. who put him in possession of exchequer-bills and India-bonds to the amount of sixty-three thousand pounds; and they had, as he desired, reserved the odd money, amounting to upwards of seven hundred pounds, in their hands, to answer his immediate demands. He, in return for their evident wish to oblige him, after promising to bank with them, and requesting they would for the present secure the bonds, &c. in their strong room, detailed his pecuniary arrangements with Mr. Levi; and they declared, as he already felt convinced, that no other man would have been equally liberal.

Having completed this business much to his satisfaction, our hero proceeded into Grosvenor-place, where he found his friend,

and the sailor, as he termed his second brother, who seemed no less pleased to see him, and who readily agreed to accompany them into Finsbury-square; but as James was still, lame, they merely walked into Piccadilly, where they stepped into a hack, which they ordered to Mr. Levi's, who received them with more than cordiality, as he declared he was honoured and delighted by their visit; and seldom, if ever, had our hero spent a more agreeable day.

They did not separate till a late hour, and Charles promised to look in upon the brothers before he left town, if he had a moment to spare: as he proposed calling upon his brother in the morning, and was to accompany Mr. Levi to the Bank at one, therefore they agreed to excuse him should he disappoint them, assuring him they should not leave home till one at soonest, as Robert particularly wished to see him, as he was to leave town for Plymouth the day following.

CHAP. IX.

DURING an early breakfast the next morning, Charles reverted to his intended purchase, asking Mr. Levi whether he would advise him, unsettled as he yet was, to purchase a town house, and to support a regular establishment when he returned to London?

The old gentleman thought he could not do better; he would be rich enough; and as he hoped he would soon receive lady Susan's final *yes* or *no*, he had better have a house to take her to; his mother would find it a very convenient temporary abode till then, and his sisters (one or more) would not object to doing the honours for him—"but we can talk these matters over when you return from Claverton," he continued; "so go and pay your visits, as I shall expect you at one."

Charles instantly set off; he knew John was required to be at his office by ten o'clock, and as it was now near nine, he

resolved to call upon him before he proceeded into Gower-street. His mother and Edward had written him, that he boarded and lodged with a family in Essex-street, and at the pace he usually walked, he knew he should soon be there.

Now John had heard he was in town from sir John Saunders, whom he had met at one of the gaming-houses he was in the habit of frequenting, on the Friday evening—perhaps he was come over upon military business: his dress warranted the surmise—the handsome coach was doubtless his friend Frazer's father's—he had taken up his abode in Grosvenor-place; should he, or should he not, mention his arrival to his uncle?—this required some deliberation. A sort of polite reconciliation had taken place between him and the baronet, as sir George thought he might learn how his uncle went on, and many particulars respecting the family at Claverton and the Moncriefs, of which he must else remain in ignorance; and John, who found his uncle did not disapprove of the intimacy, thought it might be to his interest to keep

in with his rich brother. They had therefore joined in reprobating Charles's generosity to Edward, and the baronet assured John that he would not pay him the promised thousand pounds till he had humbled the *soldier's* proud spirit, whose pay would but ill suffice if he was often so liberal: as to his boasted bravery, that was owing to desperation—none fought so well as those who had nothing to lose. His romantic marriage was another proof of his folly, though they were both very anxious to learn whether he had been a real gainer by that connexion; but this they did not acknowledge even to each other. But having so far agreed respecting his conduct, John called in Gower-street on the Saturday to give in his report, and, as he said, to ask the baronet's advice respecting communicating his arrival to their uncle.

“Sir John Saunders is not to be much depended upon,” said sir George in reply to his relation, “though I believe lady Franklin, our mother, had some expectation of his return. The carriage must, as you suppose, have been Mr. Frazer senior's”

—Strange that such a man should encourage his son to enable his *protégées* thus to shew of—Talking of them, surely the elder son of that family is just dead, so I suppose Charles's *benefactor*, as he once styled the present *heir apparent* of the Frazers, is lord paramount; methinks it would have been more becoming had Charles visited his mother, instead of driving about town and aping the fine gentleman—By the way, lady Franklin keeps possession of Claverton, greatly to my inconvenience. Pray does our uncle mean to make his promised addition to our sisters' fortunes, or was it mere bombast, to perplex me?"

"I really cannot say; he is never long in the same mind—but shall I tell him 'Charles is in town?'"

"I see no objection, as you will then see how the old man stands affected towards *Quixotte*, and may shape your own conduct accordingly, since you will be as great a fool as Charles proved himself, if you encourage him in contradiction to his wishes. I shall steer à middle course, and be guided by circumstances; but this he may rely

upon, that he shall not make any more presents at my expence, since if he does not want money, I shall not give him any."

John thought this a very wise determination, hinting that a couple of hundred pounds would be of great use to him, and might be deducted out of his thousand pounds.

The baronet did not choose to understand him, pleading an engagement, to excuse his not asking him to spend the evening.

John, in his soul, hated sir George, whom he thought the counterpart of his uncle, with respect to avarice ; but as he must be a loser by quarrelling with him, and might be a gainer by following his advice, he hastened to the Temple ; and as Mr. Franklin was alone and at home (indeed his increasing complaints seldom allowed him to take much exercise,) he was admitted, and instantly gave in his report, which he rather embellished, adding, " sir George was grieved that Charles paid no more respect to his mother's feelings, since his first visit ought to have been to Claverdon (if, in-

deed lady Franklin had not declined seeing him), declaring that for his part, he should be entirely guided by his uncle's wishes."

"I dare say you think I ought to be very grateful for having made them the rule of your conduct? but I desire you will be guided by your own feelings, since whether you receive your brother or not, is a matter of absolute indifference to me. As to his being returned, which seems to astonish you so much, did you suppose he was naturalized a Spaniard because he had married there? and as young Frazer enabled him to enter the army, I am glad he is grateful for his kind offices. Sir George is grown wondrous dutiful to his mother all of a sudden; let him regulate his own conduct towards her rather better, before he takes upon him to criticize his brother's."

These sort of vague speeches were no guide to John, but as his own *feelings* told him that he wished to be his uncle's heir, to prevent a meeting between him and Charles, he wrote, what he thought, a

most impressive billet on the Sunday, and waited impatiently for an opportunity to deliver it to his long-absent brother, who, about half-past nine on the Tuesday morning, knocked at the door of the house he inhabited. A maid-servant made her appearance, of whom he inquired "if Mr. Franklin was at home?"

"Yes, sir, he is at home, for I believe he is in bed; he did not come home till near two this morning. My mistress declares he shall not stay here much longer; but if you have any message for him, I will go up with it, and I warrant me I will rouse him."

Charles, who had been amused by the girl's anger, which he thought very justly excited, immediately wrote with his pencil upon a piece of paper he tore off a letter, "My dear John, your brother Charles is below, and anxious to see you before he sets out for Claverton." He then put this and a shilling into the girl's hand, who, after dropping a respectful curtsy, flew up, and in a few seconds Charles heard her knock at a door upon the second floor, say-

ing, "Here is a note for you, sir." She was admitted, but soon descended with the elaborate composition of John in her hand, which she gave our hero, saying, "The answer to your letter was ready written."

Charles tore open the billet, and read as follows:—

"In expectation of your calling upon me, my dear imprudent brother, I write these lines, as I regret, that standing, as I now do, in the situation you once did with my uncle, I am not at liberty to welcome you in person home; accept, however, my best wishes, and believe me to be sincerely yours,

"JOHN FRANKLIN."

Our hero was more tempted to smile than to grieve at this proof of John's prudence, which had, as well as his cunning, rather deserted him upon this occasion; so thanking the girl for the trouble she had taken,

he turned from the door, mentally exclaiming, "John is much more fitted for my uncle's heir than ever I was, since his feelings are in subjection to his interest; mine never were; I only hope he will not be disappointed in the long run," continuing his walk into Gower-street, where he was more prepared to meet with a very cool reception.

John, who had from his window seen Charles returning towards the Strand, rang, under pretence of wanting warm water, for the girl, of whom he eagerly inquired "what the gentleman had said?"

"Why, he thanked me like a gentleman, as he is," displaying the shilling she had received; "and when he had read your letter, which made him smile, he walked away."

"Smile, indeed," retorted John; "I do not think he was in a laughing mood;" but having hastily dressed himself, as it was a red-letter day at his office, he proceeded to the Temple, and related to his dear uncle the sacrifice he had made to his (Mr. Frank-

lin's) feelings, since doubtful as he continued respecting his disposition, he would not risk his displeasure by receiving him.

"My displeasure truly! — Speak the truth, boy! you mean risk losing my money for a little canting; you are father's own son; just so would he have treated me at your age. He pleaded conscience for defrauding me, and you plead fear of my displeasure for having obeyed the dictates of your own selfish heart—Pray what has Charles done to offend you?—oh, I remember—he sent his brother Edward a hundred pounds instead of you; that was indeed a sin never to be forgiven, according to your creed."

"Indeed, sir, you wrong me; I hoped I had acted in conformity to your wishes—I have no pique against my brother, so I wrote him——"

"Yes, yes, you wrote him that I forbid your receiving him."

"No, upon my honour, sir; I merely hinted, that considering myself in some measure as accountable to you for my conduct——"

“ Well, blockhead, and was not that saying the same thing ? ” interrupted the angry counsellor. “ How dare you make use of my name, to conceal your own want of natural affection ?—Had I desired Charles, which, situated as he and I were, would have been very natural, not to have visited you, after a long absence, he would have told me, in plain terms, that he would not be dictated to with respect to his brothers: so go your ways, and never make me a party concerned when your family are in question.”

John slunk off most woefully disappointed ; but resolved to proceed into Gower-street, where he hoped he should meet with rather a more civil reception.

CHAP. X.

CHARLES had of course preceded him thither ; and as sir George had just entered

the front parlour in his dressing-gown, and saw him walk up to the door, he called to the servant who answered the door to shew his brother into that room, and certainly gave him rather a cordial welcome; then said, "You have been in town some days, I understand; sir John Saunders saw you getting into a carriage near 'Change-alley; you are at your friend Frazer's, I presume, by that circumstance?"

"No, really, sir George; but I have had business both in and near town, which I shall not bring to a conclusion even to-day; but I could not set out for Claverton without first calling upon you, as you may have some message to send my mother."

"I wrote her yesterday: so tell me, have you made a successful campaign?—I suppose so, from your liberality towards Edward; did you come into any thing handsome by your marriage?—old plate and pictures are not very saleable—You are still in mourning for your Spanish wife, I presume, as sir George died last November; but you did not seem to think, in your short answer to my kind letter upon that

occasion, that I had done enough for my sisters, in consequence of our father's dying intestate; was not that one word for them and two for yourself, hey, Charles?"

"I certainly thought then, and do still, sir George, that you ought to have given us all five thousand a-piece—more we had never been taught to expect; but that sum you might have afforded us without injuring your own fortune."

"Well, I admire your dictating to me what I ought to do—you who are a mere boy to me, and who have, by your own imprudence, forfeited my uncle's regard, else you stood some chance of being his heir:—go and tell him he ought to do as much for you as he promises to do for your sisters, and see what he would say to you."

"He would with justice say I had no right to dictate to him; but I have a *right*, notwithstanding your eldership, to speak my mind to you, sir George; and I give you my honour, I am not, as you accuse me, pleading my own cause, since only do your duty by John, Edward, and your sisters, and I

will even excuse your paying me the promised thousand pounds."

"Mighty fine, truly!—But please to remember, it is wholly at my option, captain Franklin, whether I ever do give you that thousand pounds."

"Not exactly, sir George. Franklin, as I have not destroyed your *kind* letter, therefore were I inclined to oblige you to pay it, I am *fearful* you must do so; and what a pretty figure you would make in a court of justice, so called upon!"

"Did you come hither, sir, with a view to insult me?"

"By no means; I merely came resolved to tell you my mind, and my opinion of your conduct towards my mother and sisters."

"Your military rank has strangely increased your pride and consequence, captain Franklin; John would never have so strangely forgot our relative situations."

"John has become a willing dependant upon our uncle; I never was; and even to him I always spoke my mind. My mother

and sisters were left under your protection, and I repeat, you have not proved yourself worthy of the trust ; nor have you fulfilled our father's intentions towards them."

Sir George started from his chair, and beginning to pace the room, with what he supposed the airs of a man of consequence, he cried, " Lady Franklin and her daughters have appointed you their champion, I presume, in consequence of your reputed skill in relieving *distressed damsels* ;" this was said with an insolent sneer ; " but I am not to be threatened out of my money, nor induced to adopt the sentiments and opinions of an angry boy—I have done more than the law required."

" The law may, unfortunately, be misinterpreted, where men are inclined to——"

" Be rascals," cried the now-enraged baronet ; " pray *speak your mind*."

" I would not be so vulgar as to remark, that if the cap fits—you are at liberty, sir George, to conclude the sentence."

Lady Franklin, who had been for the last few minutes listening at the door, having

previously learnt who was in the house, fearing a downright quarrel would ensue, chose to break in upon the conference. She entered with a well-affected surprise; and having closed the door, remained to appearance lost in wonder and amaze, then exclaimed, "My dear sir George, what can have thus ruffled your temper?—Captain Franklin, I am glad to see you; to what am I to attribute the little cordiality which seems to prevail between you and your brother?"

Charles bowed in return to her ladyship's question, but referred her to the baronet for an explanation, who agreed he had been wrong in suffering passion to get the better of him, appearing to wish to curb his temper in her presence, not that he wished to be upon friendly terms with Charles, but he was anxious to learn rather more than he yet knew respecting him.

"I hope you left all the family well at Claverton?" resumed her ladyship, affecting to suppose he came from thence; "we heard you had been in London; but for-

gave your apparent neglect, since we supposed you were very anxious to see your mother—it was so natural.”

Charles coldly replied, “that he was going, but had not yet been in Buckinghamshire.”

“Well, you know best, captain—of course you have seen your uncle?”

The malicious look which accompanied this question was not lost upon our hero, who replied, “No, lady Franklin, I have not; he peremptorily banished me his house, when we parted; he must invite me thither ere I again intrude upon him; I only hope he will divide his money among the other part of my family, as I neither want nor wish to share his property; I had some claim upon my father’s; but this sir George is not inclined to allow.”

“You have misunderstood each other, I perceive, as I am sure, if facts have been stated to you, captain, you will agree sir George has taken no advantage of the power vested in him.”

“I am sorry to differ from your ladyship,

but I think he has made an unwarrantable use of his *power*."

"Then you are singular in your opinion, captain Franklin."

"I fear not, lady Franklin, as I know my brother has fallen in many people's esteem, in consequence of his behaviour to my mother and sisters—in a word, did it meet Mr. counsellor Franklin's approbation?"

Sir George, who had continued pacing the room, appearing fearful of again losing his temper, hastily left the apartment, and his lady to defend his conduct, who agreed that the counsellor had chosen to reflect upon sir George; "but if you had heard how he reviles you, captain Franklin," she continued, "you would acknowledge that he is more swayed by caprice than by justice or reason—remember, sir George has, or means to divide between you the whole sum originally settled upon the younger branches; and we now, much to our inconvenience, remain in town, because lady Franklin is not yet provided with a house. I agree, she has been rather kept in suspense by the counsellor, who has

been holding out hopes, just to sow discord amongst us, which he cannot find in his heart to realize; but her ladyship proposes to take a ready-furnished house in the more immediate vicinity of Chesham, if he does not very speedily fulfil his promises, which extended to the providing her with a comfortable home; she does not approve of London at this season, else this house is much at her service."

"I cannot suppose my mother is aware that she is putting you to any inconvenience, lady Franklin; however, I will take care to inform her how much she is already beholden to you, and I think I may venture to promise that Claverton shall soon be vacated for your reception."

"I hope, captain, you do not mean to widen the breach, since I hardly understand your meaning."

"I did not know that any breach existed; however, if I cannot heal it, I will not make more mischief. My mother and sisters must find themselves in a very uncomfortable situation, having fallen, as they have done, from the grasp of affluence."

“ Why, you talk, captain, as if they were in distress; surely her ladyship’s jointure—”

“ Is twelve hundred a-year, madam. She only last year had as many thousands at her command.”

“ Agreed; but all widows are liable to the same misfortune; the elder son is required to support the future dignity of the family.”

“ Very true, madam; my father lived as became his rank, and yet allowed my brother, when he married, more than my mother and four sisters will now have to spend; and he had also the interest of your fortune to bear him out.”

“ I assure you, captain, when every deduction has been made, our income will not be much larger than the late sir George’s, and we have, like him, an increasing family,” glancing at her own appearance; “ we support your younger brother at college, and mean to give him the living of ***, which we might reserve for one of our sons.”

“ Sir George *might* act more unjustly than he has done already, there I agree;

but I know, and can affirm, that my father intended that living for his youngest son, who was in consequence educated for the church, and I dare believe a court of equity would confirm my brother's claim; nor is it too late to have an account taken of my father's personals, which, according to law, belong to the younger branches, and I dare say they would afford them a better provision than sir George has allotted them; therefore advise him not to boast of his generosity, since he may yet be required to do them justice—they ask no more."

"Why surely, captain, you do not mean to threaten us with a chancery suit?—but you have really a happy knack, witness your uncle, of rendering your friends your enemies; but I can make allowances for a young man of so independent a spirit;" but that moment a servant entered, to inform her breakfast was waiting. "Very well," she replied: "Come, captain, you shall take this meal with us; we must not part in enmity."

"I give you my honour, madam, I har-

hour none; but as I breakfasted two hours ago, you must excuse me."

As they had now reached the hall, he advanced to the street-door (his brother did not keep a porter, nor indeed a decent establishment), which he opened himself, and pulling it after him, found himself once more in the street—"This has been my first, and I think I may swear it shall be my last visit, so I will hasten to Grosvenor-place, and take leave of my more than brother—my friend Frazer, to whom I am more indebted than (general Davers and Mr. Levi excepted) any other person—and much more than to any of my own relations, my dear mother not included."

CHAP. XI.

SCARCELY had lady Franklin taken her seat at the breakfast-table, and given in her report,

when John Franklin was announced, and shewn in, and he took great merit to himself for having so easily dismissed our hero, declaring that he was not inclined to listen to his complaints of his uncle.

“A puppy! I wish I had not admitted him,” cried the baronet; “he wanted to bully me out of the thousand pounds I promised him, and actually threatened me with a chancery suit—he, poor d—, who has only a captain’s commission to depend upon, therefore, as I told him, not half so well-off as you are, John. I wonder what my uncle will say when he hears he has called upon us.”

“Why, he abused me for not admitting him—called me a selfish mortal, and an unnatural brother, when, if I had seen him, he would have declared I had done it to provoke him.”

“I wish I had known as much before,” cried the now-repentant baronet; “that old miser never knows his own mind; he may encourage Charles to go to law; who can tell they are not in a league?”

“Then Charles did not speak the truth,”

said lady Franklin, "when he declared he had not seen his uncle."

Sir George, who was angry with himself; her, and John, swore she had made bad worse, as women generally did; if she had not interfered, he and Charles should have parted friends; blamed John for his behaviour towards him, and himself for listening to his suggestions, since it might be thousands out of his pocket were Mr. Franklin seriously to resent his treatment of Charles.

John, who felt provoked in his turn, declared, "that he had repeatedly heard his uncle say, he (sir George) should never come in for his money, therefore his only chance was his dying intestate, like his father, as he believed he was heir-at-law."

The baronet fired at this surmise, and prognosticated John would never be his heir—in short, they continued to taunt each other, till, like their father and uncle, they separated, resolved never to meet again.

Meanwhile our hero, little supposing that he had thus created a breach between his

brothers, hastened into Grosvenor-place, where he briefly recapitulated the reception he had met with in Essex and in Gower-street, declaring, "that he did not envy his brother's good fortune in a wife, as lady Franklin seemed all eyes and ears, and a downright shrew."

"But sir George governs her, reportsays," resumed Frazer; "however, all the harm I wish them for their shameful treatment of you, and all the family, is, that they may be mutual plagues to each other. As to John, he may be guided by old Cent. per Cent.; but sir George is his own master, therefore for him there is no excuse."

The sailor, who now joined them, "hoped he should soon return with as many laurels as he (Charles) had obtained."

"And plenty of prize-money," added our hero, who, after spending an hour very pleasantly, and promising to see Frazer as soon as he returned to town, departed, and made the best of his way to Finsbury-square.

Mr. Levi was anxiously looking for him; and as his carriage was in waiting, they

proceeded to the Bank, where Charles accepted stock to the amount of their agreement; and as the old gentleman had some other business to settle, our hero hastened to Messrs. Thornhills, where he took India bonds, as going in the least compass, to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, which he meant to distribute between his sisters, as it would be giving them less trouble than making over stock to them, and his gift would appear less ostentatious; for his mother, he resolved to purchase a comfortable residence; and as to Edward, he would render him completely independant of sir George, but should not advise his giving up any of his claims upon his father's property.

John evidently flattered himself with the hope that he should be his uncle's heir—at all events, as he had not chosen to receive him, he should not make him any present. Respecting Mrs. Moncrief, he should be guided by circumstances; but thought a set of jewels would be the most acceptable offering there, since he was well convinced that “where much is given, much is re-

quired ;" and who had ever been so suddenly raised from comparative poverty to more than affluence ? he ought, therefore, to convince the world, and his family in particular, that he was deserving of his good fortune.

Mr. Levi had just reached home when he arrived, and he found a neat travelling trunk, ready packed for his journey, and every other necessary provided which he had omitted to order ; he had told Sutton that he should not take him with him, as his stay would be so very short ; nor did he wish to afford him an opportunity of communicating to the household of Claverton what he chose they should learn from himself.

An early dinner was served the moment he entered the house ; and as the servants were, at his request, soon dismissed, he amused the old gentleman by a relation of his morning adventures :—" Sir George's conduct was merely of a piece with his behaviour to the rest of the family. As to Mr. John Franklin, if indeed he acted by his uncle's orders, there might be the shadow of an excuse for him ; he should not envy

him Mr. Franklin's money, if it was only to be obtained by stifling every natural sentiment and feeling."

"If I am to believe lady Franklin, my uncle seems to hold me in detestation."

"I do not believe he does that; to me he appeared more disappointed than absolutely angry; still not inclined to forgive what he chose to term your folly—that is, having married my granddaughter."

"He is so strange a mortal, that I never knew how to frame my conduct to meet his approbation; he was always jealous of my family, therefore he may now be equally tenacious with respect to John; if so, I exonerate my brother from any blame towards me, since where so much is at stake, it was more natural to give me up, than to run the risk of offending Mr. Franklin."

The appearance of the hack chaise, which had been ordered for four o'clock, obliged them to drop the subject.

Mr. Levi took an affectionate leave of his young favourite, adding, "As I am almost as anxious to learn whether you are to have Rose Hill as you can be, I shall sleep at sir

Anthony's on Wednesday night, where you may call for me in the morning, as I shall not call upon lady Marchmont and lady Susan, since I shall prefer gaining my intelligence from you."

Charles felt gratified by the interest he took in his concerns, and at the moment of parting, the old gentleman put a small box into his hand—"A few bawbles for your sisters, which you may present in my name, and distribute according to your own feelings—To your mother, say every thing that is proper for me, and request she will henceforth rank me among those friends who are most anxious to serve her; she will really confer a favour upon me by putting my sincerity to the test."

Charles could not express half the gratitude he felt, as the old man hurried him off, declaring his motto was—"Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest!" So all being ready, our hero drove from the door, followed by his best wishes; and as he was almost immediately off the stones, he examined the contents of his box, which contained a variety of elegant ornaments in

jewelry of the most fashionable make, which he knew would be very acceptable to his sisters. Some more suitable trinkets were marked "lady Franklin," and a brooch and ring, something similar to two of his own, which had been presents of his late wife's, were marked "Edward Franklin." Charles felt more grateful than had he been three times as bountiful to himself. But while he is returning thanks to the Giver of all good, and making many excellent resolutions respecting his future conduct, since he did not, like sir George—

"Suffer

Prosperity to swell him 'bove a man;

Like those impressions in the air, that rise

From dunghill vapours, scattered by the wind,

Leave nothing but an empty name behind,"

we will precede him to Claverton, where his letter announcing his visit had occasioned great debates, if not an absolute quarrel, between his mother and sisters.

The three elder *Miss Franklins*, for such they continued, sorely against their will, being all three on what is termed the wrong side of thirty, had been grievously disap-

pointed when their father died ; their uncle's promises had rather revived their spirits ; but he had kept them so long in suspense, they began to fear they were doomed to vegetate upon two hundred a-year while they lived, which, after their mother's demise, admitting they agreed to reside together, would be next akin to starving, if they endeavoured to maintain any appearance of gentility. These melancholy reflections had not improved their tempers ; and as they had from girls fancied Charles was their mother's darling, they had never liked him ; his being selected by their uncle had rendered him still more an object of their aversion, since perhaps they did not absolutely hate him, though they rejoiced when he was discarded, as they affirmed, in disgrace, by the old man ; and we are sorry to add, they pined when they heard of his success abroad—nay, they even grudged him the promised thousand pound, the baronet talked of giving him, as his present to Edward they considered as a slight to themselves ; of course they felt no wish to welcome him home, and would fain have per-

sued lady Franklin to have forbid his coming, "which, they were sure, would offend their uncle."

Her ladyship merely repeated her former determination, and wrote to Edward, and Louisa, her youngest daughter, who was still with Mrs. Moncrief, to give him the meeting at Claverton, desiring Edward would go round by London that he might escort his sister down.

He was delighted with the idea, and Louisa was no less anxious to see a brother ~~she~~ hardly remembered, of whom colonel Moncrief had formed a very high opinion.

Mrs. Moncrief retained a very pleasing recollection of her playfellow, as she was one year older than our hero; Edward was one year younger; Louisa was just of age: she, like Mrs. Moncrief, was very handsome, therefore not much in favour with her elder sisters. Edward and she came down on the Monday, and proved very able auxiliaries to their mother, as Edward felt the greatest affection for Charles, and Louisa adored him, she said, for his independent spirit, his bravery, and his gallantry.

The Miss Franklins affected to treat her as a child—called her a baby, and “hoped she would not follow so *independent an example*, by marrying equally imprudently.”

“I have no money to tempt a fortune-hunter, therefore I hope your fears are groundless, ladies,” was the retort; “my only fear is, that I shall follow your example, and remain Louisa Franklin.”

They did not relish the joke; but as lady Franklin laughed, they affected to do the same; and though they would not acknowledge it, they were, to the full as curious, if not so anxious, to see the absentee.

CHAP. XII.

IT was nearly dusk before our hero reached the park-lodge of his paternal mansion. How many changes had taken place since he last past those gates! he reflected. Sir George

had always been to him a kind father, and when his uncle had discarded him, had proved himself most so ; he therefore honoured his memory, and deeply regretted his death, since this beautiful park now belonged to his brother, and he should probably never cross it again." Such were his thoughts as he leaned out of the chaise window—" There was the fish-pond into which his uncle had fallen—Well, he still rejoiced at having been permitted to save his life—there was an oakling of his planting—and there was the house !"

Scarcely had the postillion stopped, ere Edward, who was looking out for him, tore open the door, and caught his brother in his arms ; he next hurried him to his mother, whose tears of joy spoke her welcome, while she returned her thanks for his having been preserved in the hour of danger.

Louisa next approached, saying, " Do you remember little Lucy, as you used to call me ?—I perfectly recollect a dog of yours devouring my wax doll."

Charles gave her a truly fraternal em-

brace, acknowledging himself her debtor in a doll, and regretted he had not put one in his pocket for her.

The *three Miss Franklins* next advanced, and more ceremoniously welcomed him to Claverton, all declaring "he was grown quite out of their knowledge."

Charles embraced the three, and though he retained no recollection of their former kindness towards him, he felt very cordially inclined towards them. They had not, like him, Edward, and Louisa, improved in point of appearance, since, notwithstanding their Brutus wigs and youthful dress, they looked full their age, and seemed to have adopted the stiffness of old maidenism. Louisa he thought very handsome, and he soon discovered that she was by no means deficient in point of wit, and more than a match, in every respect, for the elder misses. But tea being over, and the first general inquiries on all sides having been made and answered, lady Franklin asked our hero "if he had seen sir George while in town?" He candidly related all that

had passed between them, certainly making the best of a bad story ; but concluded by seriously advising his mother would remove, as soon as she met with any house where she might be tolerably comfortably lodged.

“ I have ~~one~~ in view ; but Mr. Franklin has, or I mistook his meaning, almost engaged or purchased one for my reception, therefore I have remained here, else I am very unwilling to lay myself under the shadow of an obligation to sir George, whose behaviour to you convinces me that he is resolved to make us all feel his power.”

“ In your ladyship’s place,” resumed the elder Miss Franklin, “ I should not remove till Mr. Franklin had procured you a residence—sir George dare not turn you out, and he deserves to be perplexed : do not, as the vulgar say, ‘ cut off your nose to be revenged of your face.’ Captain Franklin’s *independent notions* may be very fine in theory, but as they have led him to comparative poverty, you ought to pause before you adopt them.”

“ And so keep possession of Claverton

to spite sir George and his lady," said Louisa. "I am afraid, mamma, that would be cutting off *our* supplies, if not *our* noses, as George could starve us out, and my rich uncle does not seem inclined to enable us to brave his resentment; as for me, colonel Moncrief has given me a general invitation, so I am very disinterested in my advice; but I really think the sooner my mother removes, the better."

To prevent her elder daughters from replying, lady Franklin asked Charles if he had seen John?

"I called in Essex-street, and here are John's reasons for being denied to me," putting his letter into his mother's hands.

She read it aloud, and the elder ladies declared "they could not blame John"; it would have been very imprudent in him to have risked offending their uncle—Charles ought to recollect that even his coming to Claverton might expose them to Mr. Franklin's displeasure, and thus the innocent might suffer for the guilty."

"Nay, nay, sisters," cried the provoked Louisa, "I will exonerate you from all

blame, since you were not consenting to my mother's receiving Charles."

"And I will speedily remove your fears, ladies," rejoined Charles, "as I shall return to town on Thursday morning, since nothing but my ardent wish to see my mother could have induced me to enter a house of sir George Franklin's, so little do I agree with you in wishing my mother to remain here."

"You will offend again by your independence," said lady Franklin; "but I wish you, Anne, Mary, and Charlotte, to bear in mind, that while I remain here, or wherever I remove, I choose to be mistress of my own house, of my own time, and to receive whom I please; and were Mr. Franklin to make the banishment of my dear Charles the price of his favours, I would reject them with scorn, for

"What so sweet,
So beautiful on earth, and ah! so rare,
As kindred love and family repose!"

"My brother Charles very justly remarked in one of his kind letters to me,"

said Edward, "that we should have been much more united but for my uncle ; I do not include myself, since I have no expectations from him, nor never had."

"Bless your stars," cried the lively Louisa, "since you may love your brother, and I will do so at every risk—better I lost his promised gift, than prove myself deficient in natural affection : but really, sisters, joking apart, as I cannot do you the injustice to suppose you are in earnest, you are very deficient in policy ; surely we ought all to be more in dread of offending sir George than our uncle, as a bird in hand—"

"You are very fond of hearing yourself prate, child. I should like to hear Charles's account of Spain," said Miss Mary.

Charles, willing to change the subject, entered into a few general details.

"We are anxious to hear where you met with your late wife," rejoined Miss Anne ; "in some old castle, was not it, among the French ?"

"Had she accompanied me to England, I might have gratified your curiosity ; now

it would only be reviving melancholy reflections; therefore I must decline the task."

Miss Anne was silenced, and lady Franklin, wishing to change the direction of her son's thoughts, said, "Shall you make a long stay in England, Charles?"

"That must depend upon my superior officers, madam."

"Well, so little do I think your uncle prejudiced against you, that I really wish you had called upon him, or that you would do so when you return to town; I dare say, he would give you a very kind reception."

"I am not quite so sanguine, my dear mother; and, till he either invites me, or, through your means, expresses a wish to see me, I shall not intrude upon him, as he might fancy I paid the respect due to his age and relationship, merely to his money-bags."

"I think he would not be much mistaken, Charles," said Charlotte, with an affected laugh, "since you have convinced him you had not much respect for him, and he must know that you want his money."

"Till he is convinced I do not, I shall not visit him, for fear he might put such a construction upon my so doing."

"Then I fancy you have seen the last of him," said Miss Anne, "except you should chance, or have discovered the philosopher's stone."

"It did not increase the happiness of Godwin's hero, though he also possessed the secret of growing young," cried Louisa; "so we must suppose that all is for the best; but as you will not try your luck, Charles, I will mine, when I return to town, as I am resolved to visit this rich uncle, whom I hardly remember, and I will try what kind of impression I can make upon his *cold, flinty heart*, since my elder sisters, Laura Moncrief excepted, have all vainly addressed him in writing, as he never answers their kind inquiries; John has the easiest access to him, and he may come in for the most; but if I offer to become his nurse, as I hear his legs swell, that may induce him to make my five thousand pounds ten; then I must be prudent in my choice, since I

think of marriage as those do that deny purgatory—'tis either heaven or hell—there is no medium."

"You have improved under colonel Moncrief's tuition, Louisa; he allows you such liberty of speech, that I hope he means you should continue his inmate, since he has spoiled you for our society," said Miss Franklin.

"Will you keep my house for me, Louisa?" asked our hero.

"Yes, and thank you, since I have so seriously offended—when do you begin housekeeping?"

"When, indeed!" cried the now-laughing Miss Anne; "when our uncle dies, I suppose."

"I hope he is not so near death," was the retort.

"Why you cannot be serious, Charles," said Charlotte; "what business have soldiers with a house?"

"To receive other soldiers," said the elder sister; "so who knows but Louisa may pick up a red-coat."

"I hope I shall, for I dote upon a soldier!—

'Immortal gods! who more deserves
To govern states, than he who best can save?
With how perverse an aptitude disdain
Forgets its own safety!'

There is an apropos quotation; but do not be jealous, Edward, for I am equally partial to the ministers of peace, and I hope you will often visit us when Charles and I keep house."

"Then in return for your readiness to oblige me, my dear girl, and because you love a soldier, and would even risk offending a rich uncle to become my house-keeper, I will present you with ten thousand pounds when you marry, as a proof of my gratitude."

"When you marry—remark," cried the three other sisters in a breath; "I admire such promises."

"I dare say you would if they had been made you; but I do not require you to draw your purse-strings on my account, since if you have ten thousand pounds to

give away, I am sure, with my excellent management, we shall cut a dash when my income is added to yours."

A summons to supper prevented lady Franklin from making any remarks upon what she feared was rather a rash promise, since admitting Charles had, as she hoped, been a gainer by his late marriage, she did not approve of his impoverishing himself to enrich his sisters.

The elder Miss Franklins continued to laugh at *the young housekeeper*, but were evidently very angry with their brother, and very anxious to know whether he really had such a sum at his disposal; and as Charles was no less anxious to set his mother's mind at ease, when their meal was over, he requested a private audience with her in her dressing-room, promising not to keep her up late. She joyfully acceded to his request, and learnt with a delight little short of transport, that her darling child was, as she had once hoped he would be, placed in a state of more than affluence.

Having expressed her gratitude where it was most due, she stopped him short in the

midst of his generous offers to herself, assuring him "that she should have more than she should wish to spend, when once she was settled to her mind, whether her daughters chose to reside with her or not, acknowledging that their present forlorn hopes had not mended their tempers, therefore it was more for their sake than for hers she wished them to continue with her. Louisa, her '*pin-basket*,' as she styled her, would now be amply provided for, and would doubtless marry well; she had also much comfort in Laura Moncrief, and was much obliged and attached to the colonel; nor could she, without ingratitude, omit to reckon Edward among her blessings; and now you are in such affluent circumstances, what have I to ask of Heaven, since in you I shall find the friend and protector I ought to have done in sir George? But he takes very much after your uncle, without possessing his shrewd penetration and real knowledge. His wife is a poor, selfish, avaricious being, who will neither let him spend their own income, nor bestow it upon others; and I have still less

comfort in John ; he was always, as his uncle justly styled him, ‘ a weak, fawning puppy,’ and so far from being the old gentleman’s heir, I fear he will end his days in a prison. The family with whom he lodges make serious complaints against his mode of life ; he has formed some very low and very improper connexions ; and though he is in actual receipt of six hundred a-year, he has drawn upon me for no less than three since his father’s death, which he is to repay when sir George gives him the promised thousand pounds. I absolutely refused, only last week, to advance him another sixpence—let him apply to his brother, who will not, I dare believe, pay a shilling till the twelvemonth is expired. I could have supplied his wants, since your father obliged me to possess myself of all his ready cash when he thought himself dying, and I shall honestly account for it to my children. Lord Malton also very kindly sent me a handsome pecuniary present, as he thinks I was very ill treated by my own family. I mention these circumstances to you, since no one else is acquainted

with them, merely to convince you that I am what I may deem rich; and I should long since have left Claverton, if Mr. Franklin had not kept me in suspense respecting a house; but he is in treaty with lady Susan Delany for a villa, where he means we should reside, as he can let the land around for enough to pay the interest of the purchase-money."

Charles instantly related how probable it was that his uncle might be disappointed, adding, "he wished he had consulted her as matters stood, before he had gone such lengths."

"I am very glad you did not, as I may now with truth plead ignorance of your intentions to Mr. Franklin; I mean to go to London next week, purposely to see him, as I have a house in view in the environs of Chesham that I should prefer to any other; you shall go with Edward in the morning to see it, when you may tell the person who has the shewing of it, that the owner shall have my final answer in a fortnight at latest; I would take it at once, but I think it but right to pay Mr.

Franklin the compliment of asking his advice, for the sake of my children, since I should greatly regret his disposing of his money to charitable institutions."

Charles agreed to the justice of her remarks, and next reverted to Mr. Levi, giving her the presents he had sent her, and ably seconding his kind offers of friendship.

"I will take the earliest opportunity of returning this excellent man my thanks in person; and I think his presents to your sisters will render them less fearful of offending your uncle, since they must, like me, trace the obligation to yourself."

But as Charles's stay was to be so short, they had so much to say to each other, that they did not separate till past two; lady Franklin having dismissed her woman, and taken upon herself to shew her son to the apartment prepared for him, where he soon forgot the present and the future in a profound sleep.

CHAP. XIII.

THE long conference between the mother and son had greatly perplexed the elder Miss Franklins. As to his vaunting promise to Louisa, that they considered as mere bombast; he was more likely to impoverish than to enrich the family.

Lady Franklin had agreed, the overnight to suffer them to continue in ignorance of Charles's great accession of fortune—indeed she did not, like general Davers, wish any one should know the real extent of his income. He had come into a handsome independency by his marriage, was sufficient information for any body, she told him, and as he was not inclined to boast of his wealth, he readily acceded to her better judgment.

When they met at breakfast, the elder sisters accused Charles of having broken their mother's rest—"Surely he might have deferred his communications till the morning."

“ As I detained Charles against his will, you would with more justice blame me ; but perhaps what he is commissioned to present you, in the name of Mr Levi, his late wife’s grandfather, may induce you to treat him with common civility during his short stay.”

Charles took the hint, and presented each sister with a valuable gold chain, a diamond Maltese cross, ditto bracelet-clasps, with a few other minor &c. &c.’s ; and, as lady Franklin had predicted, they smiled most sweetly upon their *kind* brother, while they secretly dreaded he really meant to give Louisa ten thousand pounds ; but well aware that they might lose, and could not hope to gain, by giving way to their natural bad tempers and prying dispositions, they appeared all cheerfulness, and seemed very anxious to atone for their unpleasant remarks the overnight.

Charles was glad to see harmony restored amongst them, while Louisa was lavish in her expressions of admiration with regard to her present, telling our hero, “ that if he would take her back to town

with him, (which she hoped he would not refuse, as Edward, who had escorted her down, was to wait for her mother, and she had promised Mrs. Moncrief to return on Thursday), she would return Mr. Levi her thanks in person, though, after all," she continued, "we are equally, if not more obliged to you, since if he did not like you as much as I do, he would never have spent so much money upon *us* girls."

The Miss Franklins spoke to the same effect.

Charles, who was very little flattered by what they said, having agreed to take charge of Louisa on his return, trusting to lady Susan Delany's politeness to excuse his taking her to Rose Hill, set out with Edward to view the house near Chesham, and during their walk, he entered into many confidential details to this his favourite brother, who appeared, like his mother, to participate in his good fortune, without any hope or wish of benefiting by it; he acknowledged that it rather hurt him to be so apparently dependent upon sir George, who made a great merit of giving him the

living, which, in fact, he dared not withhold from him, since he should take orders previous to the long vacation, when he meant to enter into proper arrangements with the present incumbent, who was very old and infirm, to become his curate ; the thousand pounds the baronet was to give him would set him a-going ; and he hoped he should always have a trifle to bestow upon those poor who would fall under his protection.

“ Pity such a spirit as yours, Edward, should ever be restricted ; Fortune has, as I have told you, been very bountiful to me of late, and with whom can I better share her gifts ? therefore you must accept of this small share of my abundance,” putting India-bonds to the amount of ten thousand pounds into his hands, “ since never again shall you experience the galling sensation of dependence, or even obligation, to sir George.”

Edward's countenance and starting tears were more eloquent than any thing he could have said, and he only hoped that he should prove equally deserving of the bounty of Providence ; adding, “ I have

never yet received a shilling of the two hundred a-year the baronet promised me, except, indeed, he included the hundred pounds he gave me for mourning in the allowance. Your kind present, and a similar one from my mother, would have enabled me to conclude my time at college with eclat; and I had resolved, before you rendered me so rich a man, never to ask him for a farthing."

"There I commend your spirit; the living he must and shall give you; let him keep his money, a boasting miser! since his counterpart, I mean his wife, told me they maintained you at college."

Edward gaily observed, "it had been at a small expence."

The house they went to see exactly met their approbation, and Charles resolved to make the purchase for his mother, should his uncle not anticipate his intention.

This he told her when they returned, and she learnt with still more pleasure how bountiful he had been to Edward, who had promised not to mention the circumstance to his sisters while he staid. The jewels

had worked such a reformation in their mode of behaviour towards Charles, that had they been less eager to display their tempers when he arrived, he might have fancied they were very much attached to him. He held another long conference with his mother, when she retired for the night; and at an early hour he left the house in which he was born, never to return thither, he feared.

Louisa did not keep him waiting, and Edward, who had also risen to bid him adieu, rode a few miles with them, saying a walk would do him good, and he eagerly seized the opportunity to tell Louisa how greatly he was indebted to Charles.

The affectionate girl seemed, as she felt, delighted with his acquisition of fortune. nay, declared, "she had felt more happy than when Charles put a similar sum into her hands, telling her he never made promises which he did not mean to perform."

Edward, who was acquainted with his brother's intention, gaily advised her "to call prudence to her aid, since she was become a prize for a fortune-hunter," and took

a most affectionate leave of both, promising to give Charles due notice of his mother's departure, that he might give them the meeting wherever they took up their abode.

Our hero now told his sister where they were to breakfast, entering into various details respecting Rose Hill, and its present owner, which so beguiled the time, that the chaise drove into the park before they were aware of their vicinity to the villa. Louisa was in raptures with the approach, and agreed to remain in the chaise till Charles prepared the ladies to receive her ; but lady Marchmont, who was on the look-out, came forward to greet our hero, and as instantly exclaimed, "Why, you are not alone, captain !"

Charles explained who his companion was ; her countenance brightened, and she cordially welcomed *Miss Franklin* to Rose Hill, whispering Charles, as they entered the house, "I should not have been so kind to *Mrs. Franklin*—you take me ? The villa is your own ; and if you will be guided by

me, the present owner need not remove—but not a word, for here she comes.”

Lady Susan received her guests with her usual urbanity, declaring “the captain was punctual to a minute, and she felt still more obliged by his having brought his sister with him.”

Louisa was no less polite, and her manners were equally sweet and fascinating, and rather more playful; she was very like Charles in point of countenance, and, like him, a very fine figure.

“Come, let us give the travellers some breakfast,” cried lady Marchmont; “then you, Susan, shall shew this handsome girl her brother’s future habitation, while I explain matters to the captain.” But during their meal, lady Marchmont was seldom silent, hinting that she had nailed *Mr. Miser*, so the game was now in the captain’s hands, since he had agreed to the terms before he knew what they were; with many clever innuendoes, all tending to forward the scheme she was resolved to bring to bear, which, as she expected, soon drove lady

Susan out of the room, who proposed walking over the house and grounds to her guest, when her ladyship told the captain "Rose Hill is yours at the given price, and you are, as I told you, to take every thing else at a fair valuation: Susan shall give you a line to Jarvis, her solicitor—a very honest, worthy man; he will enter into every explanation respecting the mortgages, which must be paid off ere your uncle will give up the deeds; and now, as I know Susan is very much attached to the place, and has no dislike to a soldier, if you can take a hint, you may become the possessor upon easy terms; we shall come to town next week, as she has a great deal of business to do before we go into the North; so if you like her, as you were intended for each other, do not stand shilly-shally—strike up to her at once, and insure yourself a true patient Grizzel."

"I wish your ladyship would undertake to plead my cause," cried the laughing Charles. "as I am half inclined to think you are amusing yourself at my expence."

“ Me plead your cause ! I like that, you rogue !—you can do it much better ; so I shall tell Susan that her terms are yours, and that you will take her birds and her household just as they remain, as she is anxious about both, and I made myself answerable for your acquiescence.”

“ Your ladyship did me honour, and you may depend upon my improving your hints to my advantage. When I was first informed that lord Kinmare did me the favour to consider me as a proper husband for his sister, I had never seen her ladyship, yet I felt inclined to oblige my uncle ; but now I *feel* I shall oblige myself by offering myself to her ladyship’s acceptance—Will lord Marchmont be equally favourable to my views, do you suppose ?”

“ Pray what objection can he make ?—you have plenty of money—don’t boast of your family—and have deserved the thanks of your country : but you must not hurry matters too much ; Susan would never forgive me if she knew of my friendly officiousness ; but I wished you to see your way : I shall make a favourable report of

your wish to oblige both her and me ; so matters will work their way. There would not be half so many unhappy marriages, if every young couple had an equally sincere friend to guide them on their way ; for here are you two, cut out, as one may say, for each other, yet, for want of a little encouragement, she would go north, and you south, and thus you might never meet again—but here come the girls, so keep your own counsel, as you hope to prosper.”

Charles bowed acquiescence, and lady Marchmont eagerly exclaimed, “ Captain Franklin is the man to do business with ; he takes every thing upon our terms ; the birds are to be his particular care, and all the servants that you recommend he will retain ; so give him a line to Jarvis, that we may do things in form and order—I would take the word of such a handsome fellow ; but we must not proceed hand over head.”

Lady Susan thanked our hero for his attention to her wishes, and told him she would mark those things she wished to re-

move, and which were not included in the appraisement, nor were, in fact, of any intrinsic value.

Charles assured her, "that even after the purchase, she should be at liberty to remove either birds, or any other article which might have been overlooked."

"There's for you!" cried lady Marchmont; "while old Skinflint would have turned the blacksmith upon you the moment he had said done: let me alone for doing business; I like to kill two birds with one stone; so go and write your letter."

Her ladyship was not many minutes absent; and as it grew late, and our hero had to call at Mount Ephraim, he took a polite leave of both ladies, and proceeded with his sister to sir Anthony's.

During their very short drive, Louisa was profuse in her praises of lady Charles agreed she deserved her eulogiums; her conduct towards her brother having raised her very much in his esteem, the more, perhaps, for the contrast it displayed to sir George's towards both brothers and sisters.

Sir Anthony and lady Wri^{gh}ton were delighted to see him, and were all politeness to Miss Franklin ; nor were the Miss Ellingtons at all deficient in courtesy, as they fancied this introduction of his sister had a meaning, which they translated to their advantage. Mr. Levi had slept there, and now came forward to welcome his favourite, and to greet his elegant sister, who, already prepossessed in his favour, was extremely pleased with his outside appearance, and returned her thanks in suitable terms for his kind remembrance of her.

Charles now related what had passed between him and lady Marchmont, omitting her hints respecting lady Susan ; and all present rejoiced at his having become the purchaser of the villa ; but as it grew late, after partaking of some slight refreshment, the brother and sister stepped into Mr. Levi's postchaise, into which the baggage had been removed, and proceeded with him to town.

CHAP. XIV.

DURING their drive, the old gentleman reverted to lady Marchmont, who was, he understood, by no means pleased at the prospect of having lady Susan for her inmate at Bolton Hall, since she feared she would prove a dangerous rival, as lord Marchmont must, if he made comparisons, give her the preference to her vulgar ladyship.

Charles, who did not scruple to speak before Louisa, whose regard for him insured her silence, candidly related what her ladyship had urged to induce him to relieve her from this dreaded rival.

"I make no doubt lady Susan, who once had reason to consider you as her father's lord and master, has always mentioned you in very favourable terms, still I am convinced she was perfectly ignorant of this gross attack upon your heart," resumed the old gentleman; "and really she bears so excellent a character, and appears so

truly amiable and unaffected, that I could join with lady Marchmont in urging you to fulfil your uncle's plans, by giving her a right to your name—you ought to marry, rich as you are, and where can you select a more suitable wife?"

“ You forget my profession, my dear sir, and how soon I am liable to be called from home.”

“By no means; and I agree that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, neither soldiers nor sailors ought to marry early, or during a war; but you are so situated, that you must quickly decide; if you resolve as I could wish, in favour of her ladyship, she has a very strong mind; therefore, though she may grieve at your separation, she will prove a *bona fide*, and manage your affairs, during your absence, much better than the most thrifty steward.”

“ Well, I will take the matter into consideration,” gaily replied Charles; “ and ere long you shall hear my final determination; but you must allow that—

"Marriage is a bold venture at the best,
But when we please ourselves, we venture least."

“ Agreed, agreed ; so to change the subject—did you learn how your uncle feels inclined towards you from lady Franklin ? ”

“ She does not think he hates me so very bitterly as George’s wife and John wish to persuade me ; but she means to come to town next week purposely to see him, then she will be better acquainted with his sentiments with respect to me ; I fear my having purchased Rose Hill will strangely stir his gall ; yet I positively have no wish to set him at defiance ; but as I neither want his money, nor would court him if I did, nor *vice versa*, wish to insult him, because I am as rich as I ever wish to be, I endeavour to forget that he is in existence, and to shape my conduct by my own rule of right, without any reference to his approval, or any fear of exciting his displeasure.”

“ You do very right, my dear brother,” said Louisa, “ since strange must be the actions, and callous the heart, of those who make our uncle’s wishes or example the rule of their conduct.”

Not wishing to dilate upon Mr. Franklin’s foibles, not to give them a harsher

name, Charles mentioned his mother's intended removal; when remarking that they were passing the end of the New-Road, he said, "Are we going right?"

"Perfectly so," rejoined Mr. Levi; "I am going to take you a little circumbendibus, that I may have your opinion of a house, which I think might suit you, as I know my *home* is not exactly a proper abiding-place for you—you ought to reside at the court end of the town, among your friends and relatives."

Charles was happy the motion for his removal came from the old gentleman, as much as he respected and esteemed him, he felt that their different mode of thinking upon religious matters would make it more pleasant for them to live apart, as they might be often together without interfering with each other's comforts, prejudices, or opinions.

Louisa declared, "that if she had his permission, she should sometimes visit Mr. Levi, even if Charles did remove his quarters."

Our hero declared "she had been taking a lesson of lady Marchmont, and was making downright love to the old gentleman," when the coach drove up to the door of a handsome house in Upper Brook-street, which was opened by a very good-looking man, out of livery.

Mr. Levi alighted first; our hero followed him, asking "Are the family still in the house?"

"You will see it to the more advantage," was the reply, handing out Louisa, whom he gallantly led in, saying, "I shall fancy myself a young man again, now I am so honoured."

"We are to walk up stairs first, I suppose?" addressing the servant who stood in the passage.

"If you please, sir," leading the way to the drawing-room.

"I will introduce you, captain, to the gentleman now in possession, before we take a survey of the mansion."

Charles of course made no objection, but followed him and his sister into an elegant, spacious drawing-room, where a gen-

tleman was sitting with his back towards them, so interested in the perusal of a pamphlet in his hand, that he suffered the party to advance into the middle of the room, ere, starting up, he began to apologize, and discovered to our hero the features of his favourite friend Frazer.

Instantly advancing, Charles caught his hand, asking, "Pray what part are you acting, my dear James? and how came you here?"

"Mr. Levi honoured me by appointing me to fill that of *l'ami de la maison*, and of course I am here by his invitation."

"I knew of no other person who was likely to be so welcome a guest to the present owner of the house," resumed the old gentleman, "since you are at home, Captain Franklin, and will not, I hope, give us reason to doubt our being welcome." Charles was going to speak—"No thanks—I am still thousands in your debt, as I have told Mr. Frazer—Remember the jewels you restored to me, which came at such a nick of time, I have made cent. per cent. of them—not to mention the pictures—I

only hope the house will please you; if not, pray sell or exchange it for another; meanwhile, pray recall your scattered senses, and introduce Miss Franklin to your friend, as he has told me he is a stranger to every branch of your family, and to some I think he had better remain so."

Charles said but little in reply, but the few words he uttered came from the heart; and he next gaily introduced his sister to his friend, saying, "He is not only *l'ami de la maison*, but *l'ami de mon coeur*; as such, I desire you will henceforth regard him, Louisa."

Frazer was both struck and pleased with his friend's sister, and now told his friend that Mr. Levi having let him into all his secrets, had engaged him to personate the owner of the house, which the old gentleman had purchased for his granddaughter, more than twelve months before, and had kept it in reserve for her husband, admitting he answered his expectations. Proper people had been placed in charge to keep it aired, as he had it completely furnished ere he learnt her death, and it had been *revised*,

as he called it, and *improved*, by the same upholsterer, since our hero's arrival in town; a select establishment had also been placed in it, merely consisting of necessary servants, he added, such as a butler, footman, coachman, and grooms, in addition to Sutton, and the requisite female servants. One carriage was in the coach-house, and proper horses to set him a going; "so you must now alter and improve to your own fancy; or perhaps you had better stop till you can benefit by lady Susan's taste, as you so much admire her arrangements at Rose Hill."

"You wish me to feel gratitude in its fullest extent, my dear sir," rejoined Charles; "it is well for me that it is a sensation attended with so much pleasure, that I shall gratify my feelings by indulging in it."

"As I have mine, since these gifts are merely offerings from that source," said Mr. Levi. "The butler (who came to announce dinner) brought them welcome news," he continued; and to oblige our hero, he took upon him to do the honours. The repast was excellent of its kind, and

very elegantly served; the sideboard was decorated with a profusion of plate and cut glass, as was the table; and the wines were of the first quality, having been chosen and laid in by the old gentleman.

When the servants had withdrawn, who all seemed, and were perfectly *au fait* of their respective duties, Mr. Levi told Frazer that Charles had agreed for Rose Hill, and upon what terms, adding, "I want to persuade him to take the owner into the bargain."

"He could not do a better thing," cried Frazer, "so let us, as a preparatory step, drink, 'lady Susan Delany,' in bumper glasses," which they all did, Louisa excepted; and as there was no lady to bear her company, they soon adjourned into the saloon, when Mr. Levi said, "As you know I am to be trusted, Charles, let me wait upon Mr. Jarvis (who is a most respectable man) to-morrow in your name, and tell him to prepare an agreement previous to the making out the deeds, which you can call and ratify on Saturday; the deposit-money must next be paid, then the mortgages must be

redeemed; and as this will dip into your present money in the funds, I will put you in possession of the remaining sum I stand indebted to you on Monday, if you will call for me at one o'clock, or meet me at the Bank at that hour; and now, as it grows late, and I have an appointment with a jeweller at nine, give us some tea, and send me home in your carriage, as my horses have done enough to-day; so go and see your stables, and give orders accordingly."

"And if you will set me down in Portland place, sir," cried Louisa, "I shall be very much obliged, as my sister half expected me to dinner, and will wonder what has become of me."

Thus it was settled; and while tea was bringing in, Charles and his friend, conducted by Sutton, proceeded to the stables, where they found the coachman and two grooms busily employed in polishing the new harness of four fine, bright bay coach-horses, by the side of which stood a pair of equally valuable saddle horses.

Having understood from Sutton which

was his master, the coachman shewed off the horses, expatiating very learnedly upon their merits: "he had assisted to break them in about eighteen months before, and had driven them ever since; and he would venture to say that no nobleman in England had four finer animals, nor more capable of doing their work." The friends agreed they were very fine creatures. "Ah, sir," resumed the man, "they would never have been sold but for the dice-box; a month ago Mr. Patterson might have had five hundred guineas for them; but the gentleman who would have given it had left town, when he was obliged to sell them; it would have broke my heart to have seen them abused, so you may depend upon my care of them."

The saddle horses they found came from the same place, and had changed masters for the same reason. They next examined the carriage—a very elegant town chariot, upon which the Franklin arms were properly emblazoned; and Frazer declared "his friend would entirely cut out the baronet," (this was said as they returned into the

house,) "since sir George's coach, which had been bought when he married, was getting out of date, and he at present merely jobbed his horses."

Charles expressed his entire approbation of both horses and carriage to the old gentleman, declaring "that he was resolved to overwhelm him with obligation."

"Once for all, Charles, set your mind completely at ease ; as my granddaughter's husband, you have a right to all, and much more than I have done for you ; on Monday I will give you the deeds of this house, and settle all our pecuniary concerns ; and had I doubled the gifts you rate so high, I should still be in your debt. Did you, or can any one else suppose, that I should not have done much more for your late wife ? therefore, as her heir, you are entitled to what you consider as great proofs of my generosity."

These arguments were conclusive, and silenced our hero, who, when tea was over, requested to say three words to the old gentleman ; they retired for that purpose,

when Charles entreated he would purchase a set of jewels for Mrs. Moncrief.

“Do you give me *carte blanche*?”

“I do, merely premising that I expect to pay for them.”

“Of course you shall, and I will put them into your hands on Monday—I have some in view will exactly suit the purpose.”

They then returned into the saloon; and as the carriage was at the door, the coachman and footman in the Franklin livery, Charles led his sister to it, desiring she would say every thing that was kind to Mrs. Moncrief, upon whom, and the colonel, he promised to call the next morning; and having seen them drive from the door, he returned to Frazer, with whom he spent a most agreeable evening, and they both agreed that the house, furniture, and every &c. were exactly what they should have selected themselves, had the choice been given them.

CHAP. XV.

SIR George Franklin, who had been upon quite as distant terms with colonel and Mrs. Moncrief as any of the other branches of his family since his father's death, nevertheless called now and then in Portland place, more out of curiosity than from any other motive; and having met colonel Moncrief on Monday, he learnt from him whither Louisa was gone, and when she was expected to return, which induced him to call in Portland place on this very Thursday evening, to inquire when his mother intended to leave Claverton; and he had hardly taken a chair, ere Charles's footman rang a peal upon the knocker, at the moment the carriage stopped.

"I should not wonder that was Louisa," said Mrs. Moncrief, approaching one window as the baronet did the other, just in time to see her handed out by Mr. Levi, who drove from the door the moment she was admitted.

"The Franklin arms and livery!" cried the astonished baronet; "to whom can that chariot belong? has my mother——"

"Would her servants be-out of mourning?" said Mrs. Moncrief.

At the moment Louisa entered the room, exclaiming, "How are you, my dear Laura?—I should have been here to dinner, but for our brother Charles, with whom I breakfasted at lady Susan Delany's at Rose Hill, lunched at sir Anthony Wrighton's at Ephraim Lodge, where we met Mr. Levi, the prince of Jews, the grandfather of his late wife, with whom we proceeded to town, and he set us down, and dined with us at Charles's house in Upper Brook-street—a most elegant abode, where he hopes to see you and colonel Moncrief, to whom he means to pay his devoirs to-morrow morning, as he is very anxious to see you, Laura, and no less impatient to be introduced to you, colonel, whom he is prepared to like, and already esteems."

"I might say the same by him, my dear Louisa," rejoined the colonel; while his wife asked a further explanation, which the

grateful girl readily gave, detailing the presents Mr. Levi had sent her and her sisters; and concluding by displaying the India-bonds she had received from our hero, adding, "He has bought Rose Hill, and all the adjoining estates; and I do hope he will make proposals to their present lovely owner. Mr. Levi, the richest and best of Abraham's tribe, has given him the house where we dined, and the elegant carriage in which I came home, and means, I find, to make him his heir."

"Are you amusing yourself at our expence, child?" asked the petrified baronet.

"Are those bonds forgeries, or fictions, sir George? I consider them as very solid proofs of my beloved Charles's regard; and as I never boasted of *your affection towards me*, nor of *your generosity*, why should you suppose I am given to romancing?"

"Why, indeed!" resumed Mrs. Moncrief. "I give you joy, most sincerely, my dear girl, and only wish our kind brother (as I feel obliged by his kindness to you and Edward) had accompanied you

home ; he always was a generous, good-natured soul, and I shall love him better than ever."

"Does your regard increase in proportion to his riches ?" asked the baronet, in a spiteful tone.—"But pray, Miss *Prate*, when does lady Franklin mean to leave Claverton ?"

"I must refer you to her, sir George ; she will be in town next week ; and as she will probably be Charles's guest, you will have an opportunity of seeing his house, for, after the reception you gave him at Gower-street, you could not else have ventured to call there."

"Pray, did Charles bribe you to treat me with impertinence, child ?—he gave himself very improper airs when he called upon me ; but his recent acquisitions have perfectly accounted for his conduct."

"And had you been sooner apprized of them," remarked the colonel, "you might have been less captious, sir George."

Without replying to this retort, the baronet asked, "Pray, has he been to see his uncle, who, like me, was not inclined to

put up with what he styles his plain dealing?"

"He has not, sir George, nor never will, except at Mr. Franklin's request; so the field continues open to you and John, and of the two, I had rather he should be his heir, as he would scatter his hoards *pro bono publico*, while you are like the dog in the manger."

"As you seem to be encouraged to give your tongue such liberties, I shall take my leave; but I may advise your mother to put a check to your insolence," departing as he concluded, while the colonel and the two sisters enjoyed a hearty laugh at his discomfiture; after which, Louisa again detailed all she knew, or had learnt, respecting Charles, while the mortified baronet returned home in a much worse humour than he had left it.

Lady Franklin was, like him, surprised, grieved, and provoked at Charles's good fortune; as to John, they had been moving every engine to gratify their revenge against him, since *he* to have dared their anger was unpardonable. Charles was

above their malice; but as he did not choose to humble to his uncle, what had they to fear from him?—to be sure there was no knowing how to have the miser; sometimes he admitted the baronet, but was more frequently denied to him; and sometimes he hardly sent his thanks for their weekly presents; but as they felt assured that a mine would soon be sprung, which would ruin John in his esteem, who was so likely as sir George to be his heir? Charles's dashing carriage would do his business with the old man; besides, if he was to be *Levi's* heir, it would be a shame to bestow any more upon him, and certainly not in Mr. Franklin's principles.

CHAP. XVI.

OUR hero had invited his friend Frazer to breakfast with him, knowing he was alone in Grosvenor-place, where he remained

more upon his, than any other account, and felt much flattered by the encomiums he bestowed upon Louisa; but as he had promised to pay an early visit in Portland-place, they sallied forth together, rather before eleven, Frazer agreeing to see him *housed*, as he termed it, and readily promising to dine with him. They had nearly reached Bond-street, which they meant to cross, when they were obliged to make a momentary stop, till a party stepped over a gutter, which had been enlarged, owing to a house being under repair, and which obliged them to quit the foot-pavement for a dozen yards, or more. A slight sprinkling of rain had fallen since they left home, and some few people had raised their umbrellas. At the moment our hero was stepping over the swollen water, an old lady, in pattens, trod upon a loose stone, and on trying to save herself from falling, she knocked off Charles's hat with her umbrella. Perceiving what she had done, she made an effort to catch it, which making her completely lose her balance, the hat

fell into the water, and she upon it, screaming most lustily. Our hero and his friend instantly raised her, but she was now such a figure, their compassion yielded to their mirth, though Charles was literally a new hat out of pocket by her awkwardness and subsequent misfortune, since, independent of the mud and dirt it had accumulated, it was out of all shape and form.

The poor woman, forgetting her own misfortune, confounded herself in excuses.

Charles assured her "it was of no consequence;" adding, "all I have to do is, to step into the first shop we see, and purchase another," walking forward with his friend, carrying the spoilt *couvre chef* in his hand. They had not proceeded many yards in Bond-street ere they perceived hats or one side of a shop window, and drapery on the other; stepping in, Charles gaily related his misfortune; and while the master was selecting a hat likely to fit, a sly-looking man, evidently in a great bustle, ran in, exclaiming, with evident glee, "I have nabbed my gentleman!"

"Have you?" replied the no less pleas-

ed master of the shop ; “ well, what is to be done ? ”

“ Oh, he is safe enough in my strong room ; I did him just as I told you I should—I took care to be in time under the gateway, and just as the clock struck ten, the young chap came skipping forward, in one of your smartest suits—I say yours, since it has not been paid for. When, however, I told him at whose suit I had touched him on the shoulder, he swore ‘ it was d—d hard ; in a very short time he should receive a thousand pounds of sir George, not to mention his being the declared heir of his rich uncle, who was dying by inches, therefore it would have been more to your interest to have let him alone.’ I only replied, that while the grass grew, the steed starved ; therefore I must have the money, or he must go to my house ; offering to accompany him either to his uncle’s or to sir George’s, since no matter which of them paid the debt and expences ; I required no more.”

“ You acted very right,, rejoined the

tradesman ; “ but you say he is in your strong room ? ”

“ By his own choice, since he would not have his uncle know of his being in custody for the world ; nor did he suppose sir George would advance the money, since they had lately quarrelled ; however, as he had no alternative, he requested I would wait upon him, and gave me a few lines to deliver ; but faith the baronet gave me my answer in a moment.”

“ That I supposed,” rejoined his auditor, “ since sir George as good as told me he would not advance him a farthing—nay, he encouraged me to arrest him, since it might, he thought, bring him to his senses ere he was quite ruined, and he was sure his uncle, Mr. Franklin, would pay the debt if he was applied to ; however, if he will not agree to that, he must either remain at your house, or remove to prison. I make no doubt of getting my money from some or other of the family : as for sir George, I should not care a rush if I was to lose his custom to-morrow ; he is the greatest miser I ever had to deal with ;

when he paid my bill the other day, at the very time he advised me to arrest his brother, he deducted one pound seven, though it only amounted to twenty-six pounds seven; but he would split a farthing—I believe, sir, that hat will fit very well, and there is not a better in all London; to the gentleman whom I have arrested, I should have charged it one pound twelve; but as you are a ready-money customer, sir, I shall only take one pound seven; we must have an additional profit if we give credit.”

“True, sir,” replied Charles, who had been shocked and rather surprised by what he had so unexpectedly learnt, since it must be his brother John who was in custody, and this tailor and hatter had evidently been spurred on to arrest him by his elder brother, whom even this man despised, while serving him. Anxious to be more *au fait* of the business, he asked “how much Mr. John Franklin was indebted to him?”

The man stared when he mentioned the name, but instantly replied, “Nearly twenty pounds, sir, the expences included, and

that is a large bill for a clerk in a public office to run up, though he has got an excellent place; but what induced me to have recourse to such harsh measures is, because I told my gentleman that I must have some money on account before I made him any more clothes, he has for the last three months employed another tailor; he may be very rich in time, for any thing I know to the contrary, since he makes sure of being heir to an old uncle, who is rolling in money, but who has not the heart to allow himself necessaries, therefore I much doubt his ever becoming security for him."

"So do I," replied our hero; "but as I am acquainted with the family, if you will tell me the exact amount of the debt, I will discharge it; therefore I request, sir," turning to the officer, "you would immediately liberate your prisoner, as it would be of serious consequence to him were he to lose his situation at Somerset House, owing to his being detained from his duty."

Both the shopkeeper and the officer seemed lost in amaze; the latter instantly took off his hat, declaring his readiness to libe-

rate his prisoner the moment his employer was satisfied ; and as Charles pulled out his pocket-book, and began to count out twenty pound notes, the tradesman declared himself fully satisfied, since this *nobleman* was going to discharge the debt, desiring the officer would hasten to release Mr. Franklin.

“ Pray, sir,” said the bailiff, in a very submissive tone, “ am I to tell the young gentleman to whom he is so greatly indebted ? ”

“ That card will inform him,” writing “ Charles Franklin ” upon the back of one of the shop cards the latter had laid before him.

The man bowed and hurried off ; and having soon settled the business, the friends proceeded on their walk, Charles rejoicing he had been so fortunate as to rescue John out of the hands of the Philistines, requesting Frazer would keep his secret, though he feared it would reach his uncle's ears, since sir George had not only planned, but was acquainted with his arrest ; and both agreed that the baronet *out-heroded* coun-

seller Franklin in spite and malice, and want of fraternal affection.

Having reached Portland-place, the friends separated ; Frazer was going home to write letters, and Charles proceeded to colonel Moncrief's, who gave him a most flattering reception, and his sisters vied with each other in evincing their regard for him.

Louisa related who she had met when she returned home the preceding evening, and gave so ludicrous an account of the baronet's mortification, he joined her and Mrs. Moncrief in a hearty laugh.

The colonel hoped he would dine with them, if he had no prior or better engagement ; he mentioned having engaged his friend Frazer.

"Then he must bring him with him," said Mrs. Moncrief.

The colonel seconded her so warmly, that he agreed to their proposal ; and having sat for near two hours, and been almost as confidentially communicative as to lady Franklin, he returned home to write to her, to invite her and Edward to take up their abode with him when they

came to town, and any, or all, of his sisters that chose to accompany them, admitting *they dared brave* their uncle's *displeasure*; he next wrote three lines to Frazer, to let him know where he had engaged him to dine, promising to call for him between four and five, as he was anxious to promote an intimacy between him and the Moncriefs, as he greatly wished he might see Louisa with his eyes, since he would willingly add another ten thousand pounds to her fortune to bring about so desirable a match.

CHAP. XVII.

THE bailiff's visit to sir George had been particularly welcome; he dismissed him, we already know, without paying the debt; but John's being in custody, and consequently in danger of losing his place, was not enough, the baronet thought, since to

ruin him in his uncle's esteem was what he had most at heart ; he therefore, as many shallow politicians do, resolved to pursue him to destruction, without foreseeing that he might be involved in his disgrace ; but in pursuance of his wise plan, he hurried to the Temple the moment the bailiff departed, to ask Mr. Franklin's advice how he ought to proceed in so delicate a business.

The old gentleman was at home, debating in his own mind whether he should come to lady Susan's, or rather, her uncle's terms ; and wondering whether, as he had been given to understand, they really had a purchaser in view ; when sir George, after a prefatory speech, in which he declared "he had been shocked, amazed, and distressed," proceeded to relate how he had learnt John's arrest, and concluded by asking the old gentleman's advice, "since he meant to be wholly guided by his wishes."

"I am obliged to you for your information, sir George, but perhaps had you known that I never had any intention of making your brother my heir, you would have been less officious ; and it might have

been more to your interest to have liberated him without consulting me, as I was too great a sufferer myself by a cunning, plotting, weak brother, to encourage such a one in persecuting those whom he ought to protect; it was your duty to have paid the money, which you might have deducted from the promised thousand pounds: if you wished to learn whether I will set him at liberty, I will oblige you by saying I shall not; nor will I have any thing more to do, and if I can help it, to say, to either you or your *brothers*; I speak in the plural, mind, so you may cease your *plotting* and *manœuvring* to lower them in my esteem—I shall give your sisters what I promised them ere a week is at an end and I will enable your mother to remove with comfort from Claverton, which you ought long since to have done, as you are so anxious to go there."

The baronet was completely foiled, and the more he endeavoured to explain away his malicious intentions, the more he betrayed his real disposition; but hoping to do away the impression his communication

seemed to have made upon the old man, he took a hasty leave, promising to liberate his brother ere he returned home, and certainly proceeded into *** street for that purpose, wondering whether the counselor had heard of Charles's having launched out in such style, since he dared not, after the rebuff he had received, mention his name; but as he certainly alluded to him when he spoke in the *plural*, he felt half consoled, since he would be no greater gainer than himself by the old gentleman's death, who looked wretchedly, he thought, and one of his legs seemed to swell almost to bursting; but he had been too eager to lower John to make any remarks upon his altered appearance; he only hoped he would, like his father, die intestate, that he might, we must suppose, tread in his steps, since, as Louisa told him, he was truly the dog in the manger. Having soon reached the spunging-house, he learnt that John had been liberated about half an hour—"How?

By whom?—What security did he give?"

The bailiff related exactly how his release had been effected, adding, "the gen-

tleman's name who paid the money was Charles Franklin—I read it often enough as I walked from Bond-street ; and I never saw a handsomer young man, nor a more polite one.”

Never had the baronet been more mortified ; Charles seemed for ever to cross his path to annoy him, since he would now have all the merit he might, at so much cheaper rate, have obtained with his uncle.

John had been still more surprised when he learnt to whom he was indebted for his liberty, since he had no idea of Charles having come into any property, since his uncle had scouted the idea of his having done so by his marriage, and the officer knew no more than he told him when he gave him the card. He now bitterly regretted having applied to sir George, since he made no doubt of his making his arrest known to his uncle ; he had acted very silly when he came into the baronet's plans to humble Charles, since he had proved himself a real friend ; well, he must inquire where he lived, and at least write him his thanks ; but having returned to his office,

and made an excuse for the lateness of the hour, he resumed his daily routine of business ; but his head was too confused to allow him to be very correct ; and the moment he was released, he hastened to the Temple to see how his uncle stood affected, and to learn whether he had heard of his having been in *** street.

“ So, Mr. *Dasher*,” was Mr. Franklin’s salute, “ you are at liberty, I perceive.”

John was confounded, but rallying his spirits, “ Pray, sir,” he stammered out, “ who told you I had been in trouble ?”

“ Your brother, who bailed you, I suppose, or paid the money ; he did not say which he intended to do.”

“ He paid the money, sir, before I could have supposed he could have learnt my misfortune. Sir George would not advance even a part of what he stands indebted to me ; had he done so, I should not have been exposed to such a disgrace ; but I will be more guarded in future, I give you my honour.”

“ The *honour* of a spendthrift and a gambler will never pass current with me, John.

Had Charles staked his *honour*, I should have placed some faith in his profession : but what do you mean by first saying your brother paid the debt before you supposed he knew of your misfortune, though you sent to him, if I understand right, and then saying he would not advance you a farthing ?”

“ Sir George, I said, sir, would neither pay the debt, nor advance me a pound ; it was to him I sent.”

“ You are determined to perplex me, it should seem—Who did pay the money ? answer me that.”

“ My brother Charles, sir ; I understood you he had been here.”

“ No, blockhead. I never said any such thing ; sir George called upon me to tell me you were in a gauging-house, that I might release you, I suppose ; but it seems Charles released you, after all ; how did he learn where you were ?” John explained, presenting the card to the old gentleman. “ Charles is the only one among you that possesses a heart ; he can return good for evil, you perceive. I am afraid it is more

than I ever did ; but perhaps you might now condescend to receive this kind brother, should he again call at your door, without waiting for my leave—Aye, you may well blush ; but I am glad to see you can feel shame ; but as I know you have not dined, and I have, I shall not detain you any longer.’’

John took the hint, and retired, rejoicing at being again at liberty, since he might have rotted in prison for what either the baronet or his uncle had cared, and, like the former, hoping he should yet be fully revenged for his late unkind behaviour.

CHAP. XVIII.

CHARLES and his friend spent a very pleasant day in Portland-place, and the next morning our hero, who had breakfasted in Grosvenor-place, proceeded, still accompanied by Frazer, to Mr. Jarvis's in Queen-square, Westminster, to sign the agreement respecting Rose Hill.

Upon declaring his name, our hero and his friend were ushered into the private office, where they were very politely received by the solicitor, who instantly produced the agreement—"A mere form," he said, "just to prevent there being any dispute about the final settlement of the business," running it over to his visitors, as it specified what deposit-money was required—what mortgages there were upon the estates, &c. &c.

Charles, who understood Mr. Levi had given the instructions, and that his lawyer approved of it, instantly signed it, promising to bring or send the deposit-money on Monday, declaring "he had no wish to hurry lady Susan Delany from the villa, though he was ready, whenever required, to redeem the mortgages, and to fulfil every other pecuniary arrangement."

Mr. Jarvis assured him "he rejoiced Mr. Franklin would not come into their terms, as he had behaved very rudely throughout the whole business."

At that moment a clerk entered, saying, "Could you speak three words to a gen

tleman, sir ; he will not detain you half a minute, he says."

" Did not I tell you to deny me ?—Who is it ? "

" Mr. Franklin, sir, and I could not get rid of him."

" See him by all means," said our hero ; " but there is no need to tell him I am here, though he must learn that I am in treaty for Rose Hill."

" I will be upon my guard," said the gratified solicitor, leaving the room ; " and as I will leave the door ajar, you may hear all that passes between us."

" Well, Mr. Jarvis," cried the old man, " why you are as difficult of access as a prime minister ; pray what am I to understand from your last letter ?—do you mean to cajole me into your terms ?—Who, pray, is in treaty for Rose Hill ?—Why were you so urgent for my final answer ?—But I shall not advance ; I wrote you to the same effect ; I shall not advance another farthing, and I must have my money before the expiration of a month."

" So you shall, sir, since Rose Hill is ac-

tually sold ; the agreement respecting the terms was signed not an hour ago ; the deposit-money will be paid on Monday ; I shall require to see the deeds you hold, to make them over to the purchaser, who will clear off every incumbrance when we meet to sign and seal, which I hope we shall do in a fortnight at farthest."

"Are you in earnest?"

"Why should you suppose me otherwise? I am not in the habit of joking when talking of business."

"Well, this is more than I expected;—Rose Hill sold!—And pray who is the purchaser?"

"Captain Franklin—a nephew of yours, I believe."

Captain Franklin! nonsense!—a nephew of mine!—I have no nephew, sir George Franklin excepted, who could make such a purchase."

"He is brother to the baronet; has lately returned from Spain, where he married a granddaughter——"

"Of Levi, the Jew diamond-merchant; I have heard of the connection, and I can

now guess where the money is to come from—This is lady Marchmont's doing, in concert with that Levi and my ungrateful nephew; but it is of no consequence; I did not want the estates; I merely require the money I have advanced—no matter who has the villa. Your servant, Mr. Jarvis; you might as well have written me who was the purchaser; it would have saved me a fatiguing walk," leaving the office in no very dulcet humour with either Charles, Mr. Levi, or the solicitor, since he had lost an excellent bargain by his avarice, and was, which provoked him more, outwitted by a boy he had once really liked, and for whom he had felt his fondness returning; but he had now effectually damped his rising affection; he would wash his hands of the whole family; where could Charles get the money?—from old Levi though, he supposed; he seemed, like John, to be in great haste to squander his newly-acquired riches, else he would not have paid his debts; but that was done perhaps to provoke him—well, he would give the four girls the money he had promised

them, and bestow as much more upon lady Franklin, and then he would have done with the whole family; and, as a preliminary step, he ordered dame Wood, when he returned home, never again to admit either sir George, or Mr. John Franklin.

She, who disliked them both, promised obedience.

While the counsellor was thus venting his spleen, and forming fifty different plans in as many minutes, our hero and his friend paid the emigrant priest another visit, and found him preparing for his journey; they made him the bearer of very kind messages to Beaumanoir, and then, wishing to let Mr. Levi know what had occurred since they parted, they proceeded into Finsbury-square, knowing he never dined till five. He was delighted to see them, and made them promise to dine with him at his villa at Hackney the next day—they could sleep there, and return to town on Monday morning, to do their business at the Bank.

Charles, who had a real affection for him, readily agreed to his proposal; and Frazer

declared "he had no engagement that would interfere with so pleasant a plan, though he must leave town on Wednesday."

Mr. Levi shewed them the pictures for which he was indebted to our hero, asking, "whether he was not still greatly indebted to captain Franklin?" and was highly amused by their account of the miser's disappointment and vexation.

Mr. Levi's villa was, like his town house, elegant and commodious; but certainly not to be compared to Rose Hill. A select party of friends dined with them; and after spending a very agreeable day, they returned into Finsbury-square, where our hero's chariot was in waiting to convey them to the Bank; and as Frazer had never been there, he required very little pressing to join their party. Mr. Levi preceded them thither, as he wished to have all ready, and they followed him into the Consol Office; and while Charles was waiting to take his turn to sign the books, and thus take possession of the stock made over to him, Mr. Levi touched his shoulder, asking, "Who is that gentleman with his back towards us?"

"I really do not know; surely it cannot be my uncle! how altered, if it is! yet his swelled leg warrants the surmise."

"It is him," said Mr. Levi; "he has been selling out stock to the amount of ten thousand pounds; he has certainly some purchase in view."

Charles thought this very probable, and kept looking after him till it came to his turn to sign. Mr. Levi had sold out what was required, as the first payment, by Mr. Jarvis, at our hero's request, and put a draft into his hand to the amount, upon Messrs. *** and Co's, Fleet-street.

While this was passing, the miser was hobbling, rather than walking, away, having stopped at one of the desks, to converse with a gentleman, by no means aware that he was so near our hero, who now remarked two well-dressed young men, who seemed to be, like him, watching his movements, and who followed when he left the room.

"I should like to know who those young fellows are," said Charles.

"Possibly they are attending to receive

the money of the old gentleman," replied Mr. Levi; "he has received a check upon Messrs. *** and Co, Mansion-House-street; and as it is all in your road, your curiosity may be gratified; I will be in Brook-street in time for dinner, so adieu for the present — You will call at Mr. Jarvis's, I suppose, ere you return home."

This passed as they were leaving the Bank, at the gate of which they separated, when Charles telling his footman to follow with the carriage, and to keep them in sight, while, arm in arm with Frazer, he followed his uncle, but at a sufficient distance not to be noticed or recognised by him should he turn his head; but he was too intent in thought to look round him, and they saw him enter the banker's, still closely followed by the young men, who stopped when he went into the house. Charles and Frazer crossed the way, and took their stand in front of the Mansion-House, where they had a full view of the door, and could not avoid seeing him when he came out. The men who had excited their curiosity continued to loiter near the spot. conversing

for a few minutes with two others, nearly of the same age, but more shabbily dressed, from whom they parted just as Mr. Franklin issued from the house, who neither noticed, or appeared to know them, but walked on to the Poultry, when he crossed to the side on which Charles and Frazer had remained, and seemed to be making the best of his way home.

“ Shall we get into the chariot ? ” asked Frazer, “ since I fancy we shall see no more ; those young men are certainly unknown to Mr. Franklin.”

“ So it should appear, but I had rather follow them a little farther on foot. since their conduct strikes me as very strange,” as the youths had crossed immediately after the old man, and still continued in his rear.

The chariot merely moved on at a foot's pace, and the friends walked on till they nearly overtook the objects of their curiosity ; they were laughing at their own remarks, and talking very loud, when the shabbier pair crossed the street, and joined

their party. This unexpected junction induced the friends to keep as near them as they could, without giving them room to suppose they were watching their motions: and owing to the time of day, and the crowd in the street, no notice was taken, though one or other of the party often looked behind, as they soon became outrageously merry, and were evidently amusing themselves at the expence of the poor old man, who seemed to walk in pain, and did not make much way. "This was no proof of their feeling," the friends remarked, wondering who they were, and why they continued to pursue Mr. Franklin. "Had he ever supplied them with money? and affronted them by calling it in before it suited them to repay it?"

While they were thus endeavouring to account for their rude behaviour, the old man reached the child-bellinen warehouse, the corner of Bow-lane; and as several carriages were turning down in succession, Mr. Franklin rested himself against the shop-window, and appeared to be admiring some childrens' caps set out for sale. This

led to some witty, or rather impertinent remarks from his four followers, which at last caught his attention, and induced him to retort by a stern look, and was proceeding on his way, when, with a shout of mirth, they all rushed forward at the same moment, and shoved the old man a few paces up the lane, who finally fell all his length in the middle of it, roaring most lustily for assistance. Charles instantly darted forward, and was in time to see a black leather pocket-book handing over to another more in the background, by one of the party, while apparently assisting Mr. Franklin to rise. Without further ceremony our hero knocked him down in the very act of delivering the prize, while the one who had received it took to his heels, and mixing in the crowd, ran down Cheapside. Him he pursued, leaving Frazer, who was regaling the other two with some smart strokes of a strong cane he always of late used when walking, encouraged by all those who had witnessed the transaction; but as he did not attempt to secure either of them,

they each made their escape different ways, while he supported the breathless invalid into the adjoining shop, who exclaimed, the moment he was sufficiently recovered to speak, "I have lost my pocket-book, containing ten thousand pounds!—Who was that knocked the villain down the moment after he had robbed me?"

"A friend of mine, sir," replied Frazer, "who has pursued the rascal who received it, and will, I hope, be able to restore it to you."

"But who is he, sir? I had a glance of his face, and I thought his features were not unknown to me."

"Perhaps not, sir; I only hope he will overtake the thief;" but as a crowd of decent people had now entered the shop, who were all eager to hear the particulars from the person most concerned in the business, Frazer easily evaded answering the sufferer's anxious inquiry, and they soon heard those without crying, "Here comes the gentleman!" Frazer made his way to the door just in time to greet Charles, who, taking him rather on one side,

put the pocket-book into his hand—"Do you return it, as I do not wish to be known; and offer the poor old soul the use of the carriage, for fear he should be hustled again ere he reaches home, as we may not be equally successful a second time."

"Have you secured the thief?"

"No; when I overtook him, and tripped up his heels, he contrived to slide the book down upon the pavement, and he looked so woe-begone, I could not find in my heart to bring him to the gallows, so let him escape; therefore go and deliver the book; I will wait for you on the other side of the church."

Frazer returned into the shop, and the sight of his book made the old man start from his stool, crying, "Where is your friend, sir? why did not he bring me the book himself?"

"He was fearful you might fancy yourself more obliged to him than to me; so let me advise you to step into his carriage, which is at the door, and will convey you home, as you ought not to walk with so much money about you."

"Thank you, thank you," was the reply, hobbling toward the door, saying, "Where is he?" but no Charles appeared in sight.

Frazer assisted the old man into the chariot, and desiring the servant to put up the steps, he said, "Pray give your own orders, sir," telling the coachman, as he walked forward, "You will find us at Messrs. ***, Temple Bar."

CHAP. XIX.

THE bewildered Mr. Franklin, after looking round on all sides, said, in answer to the footman's repeated queries, "Temple, Paper-buildings."

The coachman drove off, and had turned through the gate, and reached the open space leading to his chambers, ere he knew where he was. He however pointed to the door leading to his staircase, and having been assisted out by the footman, asked, "To whom does this carriage belong?"

"To my master, sir, captain Franklin, of Upper Brook-street."

"Captain Franklin, of Upper Brook-street!" repeated the half-incredulous miser, as he stood eyeing the elegant equipage; "and pray how long has captain Franklin resided in Upper Brook-street?"

"The house was purchased for him by Mr. Levi, long ago, I understand; but he did not take possession of it till last week. He is but just returned from Spain—you must have read his name often enough in the papers."

The old man had heard enough, and was now eager to dismiss both carriage and servants. He had, while speaking, been fumbling in his pocket; a three-shilling token first presented itself; but as a shilling peeped from underneath, he could not resolve to part with the former; so giving the man the latter, he hastened, or rather hobbled, to his chambers, where, throwing himself into an arm chair, he examined the contents of his pocket-book. The money was safe; he offered up his thanks for the timely succour which had been afforded

him, though he wished some of the rogues had been secured; but his nephew's kind interference continued uppermost in his mind—"He should not have purchased Rose Hill," he mentally exclaimed; "that was certainly done to perplex me; yet, upon reflection, might he know I was in treaty for it?—That lady Marchmont is a Tartar—~~I~~ affronted her, and she would go any length to spite me—Levi, too, he was not likely to befriend me. Charles may not be so much to blame; but why not return me my pocket-book?—that must be owing to his pride. Would he be able to support the splendid style he had launched out into?—yes, if he could purchase Rose Hill; he would like to know a little more about him; neither of his brothers would have been equally alert, admitting policy had induced them to wish to rescue him; they would not have dared to cope with such a gang; nor had they chosen to tell him where, how, nor in what style Charles lived, who was the only one who possessed a grain of spirit, and he went into the other extreme."

Dame Wood opened the door to in-

quire "whether the chicken was to be boiled or roasted?"

"Roasted. Has doctor *** been here? my leg feels very stiff and uncomfortable."

"No, sir; I thought it had been him, till I saw you alighting from that handsome carriage—What beautiful horses!—how they pranced when the man turned round!—I suppose it belongs to some lord."

"I suppose you are agitating, inquisitive old fool—a lord indeed! It belongs to your favourite Charles Franklin."

"To my master Charles, sir?"

"Yes, I tell you; are you satisfied?"

"Yes, indeed, sir; I only wish he had come home with you!"

"He did not choose to do so, as he had a fair opportunity; but he is as much too proud as his sneaking brothers are too humble."

The stopping of the surgeon's carriage obliged the anxious Dorothy to leave the room.

The medical man thought his patient seemed much agitated, and having felt his pulse, he made the remark.

The old man related the misfortune which had befallen him, declaring "he should have been a more severe sufferer if two gentlemen had not come to his assistance," minutely dwelling upon the loss of his pocket-book, and its restoration.

The surgeon declared "he must have been insane to have attempted walking to the Bank, and he dared not have ventured to have returned ~~his~~ foot with such a sum about him; he had been peculiarly fortunate upon the whole, since few people liked to interfere with such gangs."

The miser sighed assent; and his medical attendant, after giving him some general advice and stricter cautions, left him to ponder over the gallantry of his once-favourite Charles, when dame Wood again broke in upon him, to tell him the postman had left a letter for him during his absence, "Why did not you give it me before?—Chesham — from lady Franklin — means to be in town to-night," he muttered, "and to call upon me to-morrow. She is a good manager; she will not afford me an opportunity to decline her visit—Well. let her

come; I will give her the money Charles preserved, and then endeavour to banish the whole family from my mind. Ungrateful boy! he ought to have seen me home."

Thus did he continue one moment to extol, the next to blame our hero, who had reached Messrs. *** soon after the chafiot stopped there.

Both he and Frazer were very glad Providence had sent them to the rescue of the poor old invalid, whom Charles declared he should not have recognised; and he now asked the footman "how they had left the old gentleman?"

The man related all that passed, and displayed the shilling he had given him.

The friends laughed at his recital; and having done their business at the bankers, proceeded to Mr. Jarvis's, to whom Charles paid the money he had received, and learnt from him that lady Marchmont and lady Susan were come to town, as the elder lady was very anxious to put the finishing stroke to the business in hand; adding, "They are in Wimpole-street, at the house

which was the late earl of Kinmare's, which is also to be sold."

Charles said he should look in upon the ladies during their stay; and having done his business, drove home, Frazer having agreed to dress and dine in Brook-street, where our hero also found a letter from lady Franklin, who hoped to be with him between seven and eight; Edward would be her only companion, as her daughters were not partial to London in the summer.

Before he dressed, Charles ran into Portland-place, to invite the colonel and his sisters to sup with their mother; they readily acceded to the proposal, and he found Mr. Levi, when he returned, rejoicing in the idea of seeing her ladyship. He had brought the promised jewels with him, which were elegant in the extreme, and suitable to the spirit and fortune of the donor, and to the rank in life of Mrs. Moncrief. Need we say that this family-party, when assembled, were as happy as any of them had ever felt themselves?

•Lady Franklin admired the house, and all

the thereunto's, and readily undertook to present the jewels, which were accepted as proofs of Charles's regard, and rendered colonel Moncrief still more his friend than heretofore; he wished the same party, including Mr. Levi, to have dined in Portland-place the next day; but lady Franklin preferred Wednesday; and thus it was fixed, and they separated at a late hour, without any mention having been made of either the baronet or John, as the latter had both given and taken offence to and at the Moncriefs, therefore had ceased to visit them.

CHAP. XX.

LADY Franklin, who had learnt from Charles how dearly the counsellor had like to have paid for his visit to the Bank, hoped to turn his kind interference to his advantage; she was therefore punctual to a moment to her appointment, and found him seated in his

arm-chair, but so altered, she made an involuntary start as she approached him.

"I do not wonder at your surprise, lady Franklin," said he, attempting to rise; "I am glad to see you, since it is probably for the last time; I am wonderfully altered since we last met."

"I am truly sorry to see you look so ill," sir; but I should advise change of air; London must be unpleasant at this season," taking the chair which had been placed for her, and listening with attentive patience, and apparent interest, to his account of his complaints.

No mode of conduct could have been more flattering to the invalid, who next reverted to her family—"I have ordered my door to be shut against sir George and Mr. John Franklin," entering into the details, which we shall not repeat.

Lady Franklin assured him "this was the first word she had heard of John's arrest," condemning him very freely.

"And pray, my lady, why was I to be kept in ignorance of Charles's accession of fortune?—and why was he encouraged,

perhaps by you, to purchase Rose Hill, on purpose to vex me?"

"To the first of your very natural questions, sir, I reply, that I came to town purposely to give you every information respecting Charles, who came down to Claverton this day week, when I learnt with as much surprise, but certainly more pleasure, that he was in treaty for Rose Hill. He accompanied Mr. Levi to Watford on the Sunday—heard the house was to be sold—and I dare believe, he expressed his wish to become a purchaser, before he knew, or even guessed, you wished to have the estate, as he supposed that it had merely been offered you as being the mortgagee. Lady Marchmont managed the business."

"I thought as much; I knew where the blame lay."

"I do not mean to exonerate Charles, sir, at any body's expence; but this I will take upon myself to say, if you still really wish to purchase the estate, and upon the same terms he has offered, it shall be yours."

"No, no; I want neither house nor land—Charles did not wish to spite me, and la-

dy Marchmont spirited him up to come to their terms."

"He might also wish to confer an obligation upon lady Susan Delany, who seems to have made a very favourable impression upon him."

"She is a fine young woman; I once wished to bring about a match between them, but I had a higher opinion of her judgment then than I have now—still she has many good qualities; and as Charles has bought the estates, why not take the *incumbrance*? But pray, how came he to be rich enough to make this purchase?"

Lady Franklin repeated, even in quoted detail, all her son had told her, dwelling upon Mr. Levi's marks of affection towards him, and upon his, Charles's, generosity towards Edward and Louisa, not forgetting his present of jewels to Mrs. Moncrief, not Mr. Levi's offerings to the other sisters.

The old man seemed lost in wonder and amaze — "Fifteen thousand a year! yes, he can afford to keep his carriage! and I am happy to hear he has been so kind as —

Edward, and Louisa—I know why he was not equally kind to John—silly fool! but he is, and ever was, like his father, a most shallow politician. You have heard, I suppose, that Charles and some friend interfered in my behalf yesterday, and enabled me to give you the promised money for your four daughters? There it is, and two thousand more, which you may, when you die, leave to Laura—she does not want it now.” Lady Franklin returned her thanks in very appropriate terms, and he continued, “You may tell Charles, I feel myself greatly obliged to him; though his pride induced him to shun my notice, he ought to have seen me home.”

“I am convinced he was fearful you would have felt hurt had you known who had come to your rescue, since this note, which was put into his hands when he called upon John, and which he put into mine at Claverton, led him to suppose you would even resent his being noticed by any of his family. George’s wife confirmed him in this idea, by telling him you never

heard his name mentioned without reviling him."

"She lied!" roared the old man; "she lied!—John was not so candid with me, a sly hypocrite!—Yes, yes; he and George wished to prevent us from meeting."

"So I told Charles," resumed lady Franklin; "and believe me, sir, I should not thus—I will not say plead his cause, because I am sure your own heart acquits him of having of late wilfully offended you; but I should not even have entered into these explanations, if he had not been so amply provided for, that you cannot attribute my wish to do him justice to interested motives; had I undertaken the defence of John, you must have thought so; but—"

"I do your justice, my dear madam; I feel obliged by your kind wish to set my mind at ease. Charles's conduct has been uniform throughout; I alone was to blame for our long estrangement; and even when I most blamed him, I felt I loved him, since but for him I should not now have been

here; and only yesterday he risked his life to preserve mine, and to regain my property," bursting into tears, partly of affection for his nephew, partly of concern for himself, as his eyes were directed towards his immense swollen leg, which, extended at length, rested upon a stool.

Lady Franklin found she had touched the right chord; and as she really pitied the poor old man, her emotion became visible, till drying his eyes, Mr. Franklin resumed—"I grow foolish in my old age; but these are not the first tears I have shed upon Charles's account, as I could not so easily banish him from my heart as from my roof; however, all is for the best; Providence is just; I have been miserable—nay, perhaps, owe my complaints to fretting, while he has made his way nobly, married advantageously, and acquired many powerful friends: does not he despise the old miser? for such he ever found me; I caught a glimpse of his well-known face the moment he laid the ruffian at my feet, and then darted off like lightning to recover my pocket-book. Had he restored it

to me, I should have behaved like a child ; so tell me truly, does he wish to be reconciled to me? — My time here will be short," casting another melancholy glance at his leg.

"I assure you, sir, he speaks of you with gratitude ; like you, he thinks Providence orders every thing for the best, since but for your having perhaps rather too seriously resented a juvenile error, he should not have acquired his present high military reputation ; had he not, I may say, made his fortune, I dare say he would not have been so truly humble as he now appears to be ; and he told me at Claverton, ' that he should hail the slightest intimation from you of a wish to see him, as a proof that you still remembered him with regard ; ' and I will be answerable for his paying you an immediate visit, since he never was actuated by interested motives ; and now, even you must give him credit for his being solely actuated by duty and respect."

"He is the only one of your children who ever did me a service, or really loved me. Sir George and John would have bow-

ed to my wig-block had I required them ; Charles has more proper pride ; I acted very much as he has done at the same age—you know to what I allude ; but where is he ?”

“ I left him at home, but proposing to pay a visit to lady Susan Delany ; but he promised to return in time to accompany me into Portland-place—indeed he treats me with more deference than either of his elder brothers.”

“ The selfish principle is too active in their bosoms ; they are never polite but to those from whom they hope to be gainers. Have you seen Levi—the Jew, I mean ?”

Lady Franklin replied in the affirmative, declaring “ he was a most agreeable companion, and, she believed, a most excellent man.”

“ You cannot say more in his praise than he deserves ; I was very rude to him some time ago ; Charles shall mediate between us, since if he is inclined to pay me a visit, the sooner the better ; so can you and he make it convenient to dine with me ? I

shall not attempt to treat you ; but I am all impatience to see him ; I may not be here long, therefore I have no time to waste in form and ceremony."

" Then as it may derange you less, though I hope you are by no means in the state you seem to suppose, shall I send him to dine with you, and join you at tea ?"

" You are truly considerate ; I am well aware of my situation, and that medicine can prove of no avail ; I had hopes till this very morning I might recover, and that my doctor had been deceived in my complaint ; but it has been too rapid in its progress to allow me to doubt his skill. He wishes me to have my leg scarified—I have not decided ; but I wont detain you, as you will send me word if Charles cannot, or will not come."

" I am certain he would forego the most alluring engagement to convince you of his regard ; he has certainly from a child been my favourite ; but I am nearly as partial to Edward, Laura, and Louisa—Perhaps you would like to see some, or all of them ?"

"Edward is a good lad; he is to have the living in the family gift; sir George dare not disappoint him—him I should like to see. The girls must excuse me; they have my best wishes, and I may do something more for them, but I cannot admit their visits—you may bring Edward to tea."

This her ladyship promised to do, and returned in most excellent spirits into Brook-street, where, fortunately, as she thought, she found our hero at home, and alone, Edward being gone to visit some college friends, and Frazer having left town: to Charles she hastily repeated all that had past between her and Mr. Franklin, assuring her favourite "he might now mould the repentant sufferer to do or say any thing he chose."

Charles was flattered by his acknowledged regard for him, and avowed wish to see him, but disclaimed all idea of attempting to influence him with respect to the disposal of his property, adding, "I certainly pity him, and think it my duty to cheer his declining life; but I cannot either re-

spect or esteem him. George and John have defeated their own purposes; I could have told them that he was not to be coaxed, or duped out of his money; and John——”

“Why John, but for you, I find, would have been in a prison,” interrupted lady Franklin; “and his reception of you, and sir George’s mean duplicity towards you both, has done their business with the old gentleman. He dines at four, so go to your toilet, that he may have time to recover himself before you sit down to table. Poor dame Wood will be as much rejoiced as he will; she begged I would give her duty to Mr. Charles.”

“Poor old soul! she shall be my care, should my uncle forget to reward her long and faithful services;” so having settled that lady Franklin and Edward should dine in Brook-street, and told her that he, Charles, had called in Wimpole-street, but had not found the ladies at home, he sat down to his toilet; and then having ordered his carriage, drove to Paper-buildings, much softened in the miser’s favour, owing to his mother’s judicious representations.

CHAP. XXI.

THE counsellor had spent the intervening two hours in great anxiety of mind. Dame Wood had ordered dinner from the coffee-house he had used to frequent when in health, and had wondered at this unusual excess, not knowing whom he expected, as, fearful he might be disappointed, Mr. Franklin had not prepared her to expect her favourite.

Convinced now that he had a very short time to live, he wished to prepare himself not only to render up his accounts in this world, but also to appear at a still more awful tribunal; he therefore seriously, and perhaps for the first time, resolved to do his duty towards his relatives, while he also wished that some part of his immense wealth had been more honourably obtained. Hitherto he had made no will, never having been able to decide how to dispose of his money; sometimes he had resolved to

found various public charities; but now he recollected he had promised to make Charles his heir, and he would do more good with his money than any trustees he could appoint. Such were his thoughts, when he heard a carriage stop under his windows. His whole frame shook, and in another minute he heard dame Wood hastily open the outer door, exclaiming, "God be praised! I shall die content!" and the well-known voice of his nephew, kindly greeting her, and inquiring for his uncle, who rose the moment he appeared, extended his arms, and the next moment he pressed his nephew to his bosom, where he held him for a minute or more, sobbing like a child, and unable to articulate a word.

Charles gently rescued him, having certainly participated in his emotions, and took a chair next him, still holding his hand, as he now most truly pitied and sincerely forgave the poor old man for all his former unkindness—indeed he merely at this moment recollected the solid benefit

he had derived from the education he had given him.

The counsellor was an excellent judge of the human heart, and he gave our hero full credit for all his countenance expressed, while he faintly articulated, "I see I have one friend left who feels interested in my welfare ; you are returned just in time, my dear boy, to close my eyes ; I have much to answer for on your account, though I very unintentionally did you a real service, when I suffered passion to cloud my better reason ; but I am now completely humbled, and, I hope, resigned to my fate."

Charles said every thing that was likely to cheer his spirits, and took blame to himself for not having endeavoured to deprecate his anger, since he had certainly lain himself open to his censure by his imprudence.

" Say no more ; you merely fell into a common error ; I acted like a tyrant—but here comes dame Wood and dinner—Well, you old fool, have I pleased you now ? "

" God in heaven bless and preserve you

and my dear young master, sir! I have been crying for joy ever since I let him in — now you will have a real friend to comfort you, and who wont visit you for the lure of gain.”

Charles entered into discourse with the poor old soul, who waited upon them during their meal; and certainly it was a miser's feast, and rather more profuse than the last dinner he had partaken of in the same room; but a handsome dessert having been placed before them, and some excellent wine, they were again left alone, when Charles, to amuse the old man, recapitulated his military adventures—his imprisonment, discovery of donna Victoria, subsequent escape, and marriage — her death, what he had come into possession of, &c. &c.

Mr. Franklin was all attention; and having commented upon each event, reverted to his purchase of Rose Hill, inquiring what he had agreed to give for that and the adjoining estates?

He told him very candidly, entering into

various details; but did not mention having been at Mr. Jarvis's when he called.

"They will be no bad bargain even at that price," said the old man; "and that you may come into them the more easily, I will give you up the mortgage-deeds which I hold—Not a word! Surely I have as great a right to display my generosity as Mr. Levi; so now give me your opinion of lady Susan."

Charles spoke of her in the highest terms, declaring "that he had almost made up his mind to make proposals to her, to which he had been encouraged by lady Marchmont."

"Then do so, without loss of time; you cannot oblige me more; you are naturally of a domestic turn, and she will make you an excellent wife. I cannot hope I shall be spared to see you married, though methinks your being so would smoothe my passage to eternity—your countenance tells me you pity my weakness, and can feel for my situation: you do not wish, as I did, to triumph over your elder brothers—I fear I was actuated by very dishonourable mo-

tives. But do, my dear boy, indulge me so far as to make proposals to lady Susan ; I will not hold out a bribe to tempt you to oblige me, because your proud spirit would, very properly, induce you to spurn at the offer ; George or John would not be so scrupulous ; to you I shall only plead my wishes."

" And they so exactly coincide with my own, that I claim no merit for promising to oblige you, sir : I will call upon lady Susan to-morrow, and offer myself to her acceptance, and I will plead your wishes in excuse for my precipitancy."

Mr. Franklin seized his hand, which he pressed, while he looked him affectionately in the face, saying, " How much I have been my own enemy !" He then hobbled into his bed-room, where stood his iron-chest, and soon returning, put some deeds into our hero's hands—" Those are the title-deeds I received from lord Kinmare ; I give them you as a small proof of my regard ; to-morrow I will be prepared with a deed in form, making them over to you, though that is a mere matter of form, since

possession, you know, is a great point in law." He was proceeding to make great promises to his favourite, when lady Franklin and Edward arrived. He was very polite to the former, and seemed pleased with the latter; the more so, for perceiving his partiality to Charles. After a little general discourse, Mr. Franklin said, "Charles has been telling me, lady Franklin, you have a house in view—pray secure it immediately; I will make the purchase, and you must accept it as a proof of my regard."

Her ladyship was flattered and gratified, and promised to write to her solicitor at Chesham the next day; but having drank their tea, as the old man looked fatigued, they took their leave, Charles promising to see him again in the morning; and the invalid felt himself in such a happy frame of mind, he resolved to get rid of his superfluous cash as fast as he could.

CHAP. XXII.

To the no small surprise of the trio, they were informed when they reached Brook-street, that sir George Franklin was waiting the return of lady Franklin in the drawing-room.

"I wish I had known as much ere we left the Temple," said her ladyship, who had entered the front parlour with her sons; "we would have proceeded immediately into Portland-place, where I have engaged us all to supper."

"Then I will go forward and announce your approach," said the laughing Charles, "since you, my dear madam, and Edward, must receive the baronet."

"No, pray wait for me; he shall not detain us many minutes," ascending the stairs in no very pacific mood towards sir George, who welcomed her to town in very polite terms, hoping she would favour him and lady Franklin with a few days ere she returned to Claverton, where he re-

quested "she would remain as long as it suited her convenience, as he and lady Franklin were going to Ramsgate for the summer."

"Not upon my account, I hope," she replied, "as I shall remove in a week or ten days at farthest."

The baronet bowed his satisfaction, saying, "How is Charles? was he of your party to my uncle's? as his servants told me you were in Paper-buildings, and I saw he returned in your coach."

"He dined *tête-à-tête* with the old gentleman, by special invitation, and is, I am happy to inform you, a greater favourite than ever."

"Because he is grown a very rich man, I suppose," said the baronet, in a sarcastic tone; "he paid me a visit the day he set out for Claverton; had he given himself as many airs at his uncle's, I much doubt his having got into favour."

"You have not raised yourself in either your uncle's or my esteem, sir George, by the reception you gave him."

"What, he has been complaining! believe me, madam, I had the most reason, though I suppose he was set on——"

"By me, perhaps; but he is not so easily duped into doing the dirty work of others as your brother John, who, at your instigation, he wrote me, refused to see Charles, who has since paid his debts, when you caused him to be arrested, to ruin him in your uncle's esteem."

Sir George was so confounded, he merely stammered out, "that he would not detain her, as her carriage continued in waiting," and departed, without asking to see the master of the house.

"How could his mother have learnt that he had any hand in John's arrest?—and how came that capricious old miser to make it up with Charles? He would call upon him in the morning—Charles could not be there again so soon."

John, who had not heard of his mother's being in town, had also resolved to call in Paper-buildings, as it was a holiday at his office; he therefore went there at eleven, but was denied admittance. He met sir

George as he was returning down stairs, and a pretty warm debate took place between them, as he accused the baronet of having undermined him in his uncle's esteem—of having caused his arrest, &c.: sir George retorted still more rudely; but from him John learnt where his mother was, and that Charles was again friends with the old man; he therefore returned home to write to lady Franklin and his brother; while sir George, was, to his much greater mortification, also denied admittance. “Was captain Franklin with his uncle?” he asked dame Wood, who shut the door in his face while saying “No,” and he retraced his steps into Gower-street, more angry than he had been the overnight, but laying plans to bring about a reconciliation between himself and Charles, who seemed to have assumed the shape of his *evil genius*, and to be fated to crush all his rising hopes.

Charles had meanwhile paid his promised visit into Wimpole street; and as his *good genius* prevailed, lady Susan was at home, and alone, which enabled him to

enter, after a short preface, upon the purport of his visit. Few men could have pleaded their own cause better, nor have more completely overruled the few objections she ventured to start—the plea of the shortness of their acquaintance, he would not admit—his uncle's declining state, and anxious wishes, he urged in excuse of his precipitation ; and as he had a friend in the citadel, lady Susan did not prove inexorable. She desired him to apply to lady Marchmont, and to the earl, adding, " I owe duty and respect to the latter, and a compliment to the former ; but I shall not forget that I am my own mistress."

Charles thanked her more for the last hint than for all her former concessions, and was raising her hand to his lips, when lady Marchmont bounced into the room, and soon drove lady Susan from the field. She was, and seemed delighted. " This is all my doing—leave every thing to me ; the poor old fellow shall not be disappointed ; there requires no preparation—all may be ready in a month ; so not to lose time, sit down where you are, and

write to the earl; he will like to know what you mean to settle upon Susan, and all that; I will inclose your letter in mine, and I make myself answerable for my lord's consent; in four days we shall have an answer; then the lawyers may get to work; and the sooner the parson and ring " " the better."

Our hero did as she desired, offering to settle Rose Hill and the adjacent estates upon lady Susan and her heirs, and requesting the earl would make any additions he thought necessary, and fix her pin-money, having of course previously entered into every requisite detail respecting his own fortune, family, and connexions.

Lady Marchmont run over the epistle, pronounced it unanswerable, and dismissed our hero, after inviting him to repeat his visits; and he proceeded to the Temple, to gratify his uncle with the account of his success:

Mr. Franklin listened with delight to his relation.—“ Lord Marchmont would be a fool to refuse such an offer, which I shall back with some very *weighty* arguments, as

I mean to put you in possession of all I am worth before I die; I promised to make you my heir, and I will keep my word. I shall, nay, I have made a few memorandums, to which I know you will strictly adhere, as I shall not make a will, by which means you will save the legacy-duty, and no one will know the exact extent of your property. To sir George, whom I may see once more for that purpose, I shall give my chambers, furnished as they now are, after my death, well understood; you shall come into your share sooner."

"But surely, my dear sir," replied our hero, "grateful as I feel for the confidence you seem inclined to place in me, you are not acting with your accustomed prudence, as you certainly may recover, or, at all events, live many years."

"Then a miracle must be worked in my favour, my dear boy, since nothing short of that can save me; and admitting I should linger longer than I expect, I shall only be a dependant upon your kindness; and you are the only person I ever really loved, and whom I in vain endeavoured to shut out of

my heart. I never was so happy as you have made me since our reconciliation; and I will, if possible, increase your felicity, by increasing your power of doing good. Sir George will endeavour to gloss over his late treatment of you, I make no doubt, and you may as well affect to be the dupe of his *French plate*. John will be equally politic; and as he will never be a rich man, why, let him bask a little under your protection. Edward really loves you; I need not prescribe you a rule of conduct towards him. To your elder sisters continue civil; they will return the compliment. Louisa will doubtless marry well; she and Laura are good girls, and I shall not overlook their claims upon; me so now good-bye; look in upon me in the evening, and bring your mother and; if Mr. Levi will join your party, he will oblige me—Tell him I am truly sorry I gave him such reason to feel offended with me the last time we met, and that I shall die the easier if assured of his forgiveness.”

The old man's tears were proofs of his sincerity, and Charles was scarcely less affect-

ed ; but having promised to see him again in the evening, he hastened into Finsbury-square ; and need we add, that the worthy Mr. Levi promised to meet him in Paper-buildings.

Lady Franklin was truly rejoiced when she learnt her son's success ; and though they were engaged to dine in Portland-place, she and Charles met Mr Levi at the counsellor's, who, after talking a short time with our hero, desired him to return to the colonel's—he should detain his mother and Mr. Levi, as he had much to say to them.

Charles, though really anxious to contribute to his comfort, joyfully returned to the younger family circle, who all declared themselves the counsellor's debtors for having suffered him to join the party, which was increased by Mr. Levi and her ladyship before supper, and they all agreed to dine in Finsbury-square the following day.

CHAP. XXIII.

CHARLES divided his time between his uncle, his family, and lady Susan, till the wished-for answers from lord Marchmont arrived, which were highly satisfactory to all parties, and enabled our hero, with her ladyship's full consent, to set Mr. Jarvis, her solicitor, and Mr. Greenwood, his uncle's neighbour, (who had brought about the reconciliation between him and sir George nearly thirty years before) to work.

Mr. Levi was a constant visitor in Paper-buildings, as was lady Franklin; and the day after lord Marchmont's letter had been received, our hero, by particular invitation, spent the evening with Mr. Franklin, who had at last agreed to submit to having one, if not both, his legs scarified the next day; but he had such a dread of a mortification ensuing, that he was resolved to settle all his worldly affairs previous to the operation, and he now, in conjunction with Mr. Greenwood and Mr. Jarvis, who

had drawn up the proper deeds, made over every farthing he was worth to his beloved Charles. His broker was present, who had, by his orders, transferred all his money in the stocks, amounting to an immense sum, into Charles's name, and he made our hero promise to accept it the first thing in the morning; he then gave him up all the bonds, bills, or mortgage-deeds, he held as securities for sums lent, merely retaining a small sum for his current expences, saying, "he had done with this world, and only wished to prepare himself for a better, therefore Charles must henceforth regulate all his concerns, and pay his doctors," &c. He then, in presence of the three gentlemen, gave Charles a note for sir George, to whom he gave his chambers furnished, as they stood, after his demise. He next gave him the memorandums he had drawn up, which our hero read aloud, declaring his resolution to make over every sum he mentioned in the course of the succeeding day, though he made no doubt his uncle was convinced that even a hint of his would be held sa-

cred. But every minutæ of business being at last settled quite to the old gentleman's satisfaction, the lawyers and broker departed, when Mr. Franklin reverted to the proposed operation, which he seemed greatly to dread.

Charles said every thing likely to fortify his mind and cheer his spirits, promising to support him by his presence—and, indeed, he was resolved not to leave him till it was over, not that he expected it would be attended by any but beneficial consequences, but he found his presence was consolatory to the old gentleman, who had more than fulfilled every promise he had made him; he therefore sent word home that he should not return that night, desiring Sutton might attend him in the morning, and requesting lady Franklin and Edward would look in upon the old gentleman before the surgeons arrived, as he had insisted upon two of the most eminent in town attending with the gentleman whom his uncle had called in; and sincerely did he rejoice at finding his presence and con-

versation prevented the old gentleman from dwelling upon the future.

They sat till a late hour; and at an early hour Sutton made his appearance, whom our hero desired to remain in attendance, resolving to request Mr. Levi would recommend an able female-assistant to dame Wood, since as he was now placed in a state of responsibility, he was determined to spare neither pains nor expence to preserve the old gentleman's life.

Lady Franklin and Edward came while they were at breakfast, and learnt from our hero that he was commissioned to present the former with twenty, the latter with ten thousand pounds, which he promised to put into their hands ere he slept.

Their gratitude affected the invalid, who blessed them both with streaming eyes; and then desiring Edward would join him in prayer, he dismissed lady Franklin, and sent our hero to the Bank, who soon did his business there and at Messrs. Thornhill's, where he provided himself with the sum he was to give his mother and brother,

having sold out stock to conform to his uncle's other memorandums, who had recommended his giving five thousand pounds to each of his sisters, including Mrs. Moncrief, and the same sum to John; and this he determined to do immediately, as he dreaded his uncle's supposing that he should not conform in every point to his wishes. Fortunately he met Mr. Levi at the Bank, who promised to send the same an assistant in two hours at latest.

Suffice it to say, the operation was performed with the greatest skill, and the happiest success, and that the invalid appeared to be not only better in health, but in spirits; still he continued so anxious to see our hero married, who considered his wishes as law, since he had placed all the power in his hands, that lady Susan agreed, in compliment to the old man, to shorten her lover's time of probation.

Lady Franklin left town the day after Mr. Franklin had been relieved by the operation, and the following week she left Claverton to its present owner, whom she

paid for the carriages and horses she retained ; nor would she, though requested by the now-repentant baronet, remove a single article of value, as Charles made her a magnificent present of plate, china, and glass, and colonel Moncrief added several valuable articles to his gift. At our hero's request, she had received John into favour again, and Mr. Franklin saw him once, when he gave him some excellent advice ; nor did he, to oblige Charles, refuse to admit the baronet, to whom he gave the deed by which he had made over his chambers to him, in which was an inventory of his moveables, for fear he should suspect any of them were embezzled.

Sir George appeared very grateful, and acknowledged that Charles was entitled to his uncle's property, it having been promised him from a child, since he would not admit that he was indebted for it to his merit, temper, or disposition ; yet, as Mr. Franklin had foreseen, he made every concession to ensure our hero's forgiveness, as did John ; and they were not made ac-

acquainted with his approaching marriage, which took place in Wimpole-street, in the most private manner.

Mr. Levi had borrowed a house at Clapham for them to spend the honeymoon, since Rose Hill was so far from town, Charles could not have paid so much attention to his uncle as he wished, had they gone thither; Edward had, at his desire, taken up his abode in Paper-buildings, and he was to summon him at any hour, and at any time, if the invalid merely hinted a wish to see or speak to him.

In their way to Clapham, the new-married couple called upon the old man, and received his blessing and good wishes; and then, for the first time, our hero learnt, that he was to be created a peer, by the title of baron Mowbray, in consequence of his marriage with lady Susan, as lord Malton, lord Marchmont, and Mr. Levi, had obtained leave to have the second title in the Kinmare family revived in his person.

Charles was happy, since the poor old man's mind was set upon it, that he was spared till his accession to this title was no-

tified in the gazette, since three days afterwards he died in his arms, blessing him with his last breath, and was, by his own desire, buried in Clapham church, at the feet of his mother, and in the same vault with his grandfather; and as our hero, now lord Mowbray, had the ordering of the funeral, it was superb in the extreme; and he and lady Mowbray paid him the further compliment of putting on father's mourning, as a mark of respect to his memory, ere they set out for Belton Hall, where they had engaged to spend a month with lord Marchmont; we will, therefore leave them as happy as any couple equally attached to each other, and equally favoured by fortune, ever were, or ever will be.

Lady Franklin was delighted with her new house; and her daughters no longer fearing the approaches of poverty, proved very agreeable companions, and vied with her in declaring their regard for their brother, lord Mowbray. Louisa was addressed by James Frazer, as soon as he was out of mourning for his brother; and Charlotte keeps her brother Edward's house, who

took possession of his living during the time our hero was in the North.

Sir George took possession of the chambers as soon as dame Wood removed to a cottage near Rose Hill, where she was enabled to maintain a girl to wait upon her—thanks to Charles's munificence.

The baronet was terribly disappointed; but prudently forbore to express his chagrin, since, had he been more generous when his father died, he would indubitably have fared better when his uncle distributed his property. He was obliged in honour to give his sisters the promised three thousand a-piece, which they preferred to the offered annuities; nor did he dare, when he sent John and Edward their thousand pounds, to overlook our hero's claims, who took the money and gave it to John, for whom he also procured a more lucrative place, and thus insured his regard and his encomiums. But the baronet having finished all he had to do in town, at last set out for Claverton. He had not bought a new carriage, as he had once intended, with his un-

cle's boards, though he had felt ashamed when his now-shabby barouche followed lord Mowbray's elegant chariot-and-four at his uncle's funeral; but he had no coronet, he remarked, to grace the pannels of his vehicle, and this had proved too expensive a year to think of making any purchases; he therefore continued to job his horses, which rendering him less careful of the poor beasts, he resolved the pair which he drove should take lady Franklin, four of her female attendants, the children, and no inconsiderable quantity of baggage, down to Claverton, whither he preceded them on horseback.

The consequence of his folly and avarice may be foreseen—one horse knocked up, and the other was little better; but the former laid down the moment it had crawled into the stable, and the provoked coachman declared "it would never rise again, and that the baronet ought, and should pay for it, as he had overloaded the carriage, and taxed it beyond its strength."

Alarmed by this threat, the baronet sent for a farrier, whom he condescended to as-

sist to pour a cordial down the poor animal's throat, since his groom refused to meddle with it, lest he should be said to have hastened its death; and the coachman was still more obstinate; the other men servants were not arrived; and as sir George's *evil genius* was not laid, while he was thus employed, owing to an effort the animals made, the candle was knocked out of his hand, and fell among a quantity of fresh straw in an adjoining stall, which burst into a flame the next moment; and as neither coachman nor groom had chosen to be present, the farrier and him were unable to cope with the increasing rage, which soon communicated to the loft over the stable, where it spread like wild-fire. But not to dwell upon the fruit of sir George's saving plan, the stables, coach-houses, horses, &c. were all consumed in less than an hour; and the house and other buildings were with difficulty prevented from sharing the same fate.

Thus did his avarice bring its own punishment, even at the very moment he was indulging in that hateful propensity; and

as no one seemed to grieve for his misfortune. When they learnt how it had been occasioned, he began to think it might be more to his credit, as well as comfort, to follow the example of our hero rather than of his uncle; and as he must soon find the benefit of adhering to this resolution, we shall leave him to pursue so wise a plan, since, of all vices, avarice is the one most abhorred by all benevolent minds.

FINIS.

